CHAPTER 2

New Zealand’s Craft Organisations

In 1979 the Interdepartmental Committee on Sales Tax on Crafts reported that there were 45,000 people throughout New Zealand who, either full-time or part-time, were earning income from the making and selling of crafted objects. Of those, more than 2,000 were self-employed professional craftsmen (“Taxation”). The majority were involved in pottery (50%) and woolcraft (23%), with fabric printing, leatherwork, jewellery and woodwork each accounting for 5% of the total.1

The instigation of an assessment of the extent to which craft had permeated the nation’s occupational makeup did not come from a desire to understand this segment of the cultural industries. It arose because the Customs Department saw the sector as a revenue earner, by means of the application of sales tax to craft goods sold. Fortunately, a national organisation representing craft practitioners was in place to lobby the Government to reduce its financial expectations. The objections were heard, the legislation was modified, and the merit of such a body was proved. Equally important, the attention that the Crafts Council of New Zealand garnered, as a result of its voice and visibility, contributed to the respect for and wellbeing of its community.

This chapter reviews the history of the contemporary craft movement in New Zealand, briefly touching on its manifestations pre- and post-World War Two, its crystallisation in the World Crafts Council New Zealand Chapter (WCC) in 1965, and evolution into the Crafts Council of New Zealand (CCNZ) in October 1977. The WCC/CCNZ dealt with a number of concerns in its 28 years of existence and these will be detailed, followed by the reasons for the Crafts Council’s demise in 1992.

Coupled with the burgeoning of the national organisation was the consolidation and maturation of the woodworking community. From this community would come several practitioners significant to the achievements of the national crafts organisation. An examination of woodworking’s relevance to and benefits from the Crafts Council will also form part of the discussion. The consequences of the elimination of New Zealand’s national craft advocacy group will conclude the chapter.

Formal Craft Activity Prior to 1960 2

Although the presence of a formalised national body did not occur until 1965 with the inauguration of the World Crafts Council, craft activity, gatherings and education were present in New Zealand in earlier years of the twentieth century. The New Zealand Guild of Weavers, Dyers and Spinners formed nationally in 1935 (“Here and There”) but disbanded during World War II (Abbott and Bourke 14); its successor, the Handweavers’ Guild, started in Auckland in 1953. Subscriptions to the Guild’s journals came from around the country and by 1958 the Guild was organising national exhibitions (Turner 5).3 In 1957 the First New Zealand Studio Potters Exhibition was held in Dunedin. Instigated by Oswold Stephens, the exhibit showed the work of fifteen North and South Island potters. “This First Exhibition was received with pleased surprise by many who thought New Zealand a cultural backwater” (Mason 2), and a Committee was established in Wellington to organise a second exhibition;

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1 The remaining 7% were a combination of “cane, glass, enamel, macramé, etc.” (“Taxation”).
2 The context for this thesis is Pākehā (non-Māori New Zealander) craft. The Crafts Council of New Zealand and its predecessor, the World Crafts Council, were largely populated by Pākehā New Zealanders. The source material contains mention of Māori practitioners and practices but rarely discusses Māori craft traditions. Māori craft practices and organisations are beyond the scope of this thesis.
3 The Auckland Handweavers’ Guild started with fewer than 20 members; in 1963 there were over 60 members nationally (von Randow 12). Ilse von Randow was the Handweavers’ Guild’s inaugural vice president (Lloyd-Jenkins “Randow”).
subscriptions towards its cost prompted the publication of the *New Zealand Potter* (Figure 23) in August 1958 (Mason 10).⁴

One of the potters who was an exhibitor at the First Exhibition and then a member of the Wellington Committee was Doreen Blumhardt (Figure 24). In a 1988 letter to the editor of *New Zealand Crafts*, she noted the efforts in the 1930s by Dr C.E. Beeby, Minister of Education, to place art and craft in school curricula. Blumhardt trained to teach art and craft in schools in 1939 and later tutored courses to enable art teachers to be installed in primary schools throughout the country. Her efforts were acknowledged by Beeby in her selection to represent New Zealand in Paris in 1954 (Steers). Along with James Shelley, Blumhardt attended the first Art and Craft education conference held there under the umbrella of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, better known as UNESCO. This initiative reflected, firstly, Dr Beeby’s eagerness for New Zealand’s participation on the international stage,⁵ and, secondly, the existence of professional craftsmen and women within the country. Blumhardt stated, “[d]uring the 1950’s a number of the tutors and their students were becoming well-known in the craft field for their own work. A few graduate teachers did not stay with teaching but became some of the first full-time craftsmen, at first mainly in pottery” (Blumhardt).

Some of these potters gathered for the first Study Conference on the Promotion of Crafts in New Zealand, in August 1963. It was convened by Jack Laird (Figure 25), both a senior tutor in arts and crafts at Victoria University Regional Council of Adult Education and a practising potter. The Conference’s 40

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⁴ The first Guild of Embroiderers was formed in Southland in 1959 (*Association of NZ Embroiderers*).

⁵ “New Zealand was one of the first twenty nations to ratify the UNESCO Constitution in 1946. Dr Clarence Beeby—New Zealand’s Education Secretary—played a significant role in the organisation’s creation that saw him appointed Director of UNESCO’s Education Sector” (*New Zealand National…UNESCO*).
Concurrently the Palmerston North Art Gallery staged an exhibition of the “best of New Zealand crafts” (Victoria University 1). Gerald Wakely observed that this exhibition included “pottery, weaving and spinning, fabric printing, articles made of rushes, woodwork, jewellery, enamelling, copperwork, violin-making and prints,” plus a stand with Māori carving and flax weaving (Wakely 63). Another stand, deemed by Wakely to be of “professional standards” showed work by an Adult Education group from Feilding. He noted: “. . . the potters came off worse as far as liveliness and interest of the pieces exhibited was concerned. This reflects not so much a poverty of pots, as a richness of other exhibits and will, one hopes, stimulate potters to exert themselves still more at the next exhibition” (64).

At the conclusion of the Conference, 18 Resolutions (Appendix 1) were adopted, the majority of which were tentative. Given that the Conference was instigated by an awareness of lowering standards and the need for a trans-media organising body, these issues were not explicitly addressed in the resolutions. For instance, if standards were a concern, Resolution 5 proposed only that a submission be made to the Minister of Education concerning widening the scope of the Diploma in Fine Arts, without specific reference to craft. Also with respect to standards, Resolution 6 stated that “ideally” all New Zealand children should be educated in art and craft throughout their schooling. And Resolution 14 moved that the National Council of Adult Education be asked to “consider” a survey of craftworkers. Such a survey could have determined the numbers of craftworkers, the extent to which each medium was practised, and extant training, but more forceful words were needed. The Resolutions lacked the passion that might have persuaded administrators and potential financiers of the importance of craft.

Although not listed amongst the resolutions, Wakely, a potter and speaker at the Conference, said that discussion took place regarding formation of a committee to advise government and company boards of the “high standard” of New Zealand crafts. This contact would serve several purposes: make connections between craftspeople and potential clients; maintain exhibition standards; and “. . . represent the craftworkers’ viewpoint to government departments and other agencies” (Wakely 65). In addition the participants acknowledged their connection with the proposed Council of Industrial Design,7 to be legislated into existence several years hence: “. . . craftsmen should strive for recognition on an equal footing with the designers of clothes or aluminium kitchenware or boats” (66). These

6 “It was apparent that the retail demand for craftwork had far outstripped New Zealand’s resources to supply its requirements, and that the very real danger existed that a consequent serious lowering of standards would result, and, in fact, is resulting” (Victoria University 1).
7 The Industrial Design Council came into being in 1967 (Design Institute). Additional discussion about the NZIDC will appear later in the thesis.
suggestions show that the 1963 Conference participants were already aware of the need for marketing, standards, advocacy and parity with other New Zealand-designed and made goods.

Resolution 2, calling for a repeat of the Palmerston North conference, was actioned, again by Jack Laird, in association with Terry Bryant and Gerald Wakely. The second conference took place at the Department of University Extension in Auckland in August 1964, where papers and an exhibition of New Zealand crafts were presented (“New Zealand Craft Conference”). But Helen Mason noted that Laird could not sustain the craft movement on his own: “...not having the backing of enough people who cared and understood what it was all about the organisation collapsed through lack of support” (21). However, it was hoped that when more practitioners in a wider range of crafts could be called upon, a crafts conference could be revived (“New Zealand Craft Conference”). There was not another crafts-specific conference for 16 years.

World Crafts Council, New Zealand Chapter, 1965-1977

The impetus for a national organisation eventually came from outside the country. Aileen Osborn Webb (her husband was Vanderbilt Webb, son of American railroad baron Dr William Seward Webb) was a patron of craft in the United States. She founded the American Craftsmen’s Educational Council in 1943 (American Craft Council), renamed the American Craft Council in 1979, and the World Crafts Council (WCC). The WCC’s aim was to facilitate international communication amongst craft practitioners, teachers and administrators in a spirit of comradeship and progress (Pattrick “Nan” 3). Webb sent invitations to prospective participant countries, encouraging delegates to come to a congress at Columbia University in 1964; New Zealand’s invitation made its way to Nan Berkeley (Figure 26), President of the Wellington Potters’ Society. This was fortuitous as Berkeley was gregarious, visionary, and passionate about craft, as well as adept at staging parties. Berkeley and Mary Hardwick-Smith, an Auckland potter, represented New Zealand in New York, and Berkeley readily adopted the role of ambassador. She reminisced about the occasion in 1989:

I arrived there with three suitcases, one for clothes, one with bags of iron sand, merino wool samples, two NZ Kaipoi [sic] rugs, with NZ cheese and biscuits. The purpose behind this was to publicise NZ as much as possible. I obtained orders for NZ wool from the weavers —sold the sand for $1 per pound and took orders for about 1/2 a hundred-weight which I

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Figure 26. Nan Berkeley (1910-2007)
Berkeley is seen here at the Third Assembly of the World Crafts Council in Lima, Peru, 1968. She is discussing the possibility of a direct air link with New Zealand with the President of Peru, Fernando Belaúnde Terry. Shortly thereafter Terry was displaced by a military coup.

For a comprehensive history of Webb’s life see Zaiden. The American Craft Council site provides a time line of its history.
later sent in 1lb quantities to many different parts of U.S.A. After the Conference when I had lunch with the head of the NZ legation, he said he has heard of many money-making ideas, but never of selling off small parts of one's country! The other case (a very heavy one) had as much ‘grog’ as I could buy at the Duty Free store at Auckland Airport... [This case] was invaluable as I had a little cocktail party in my bedroom at Columbia University almost every night. I invited people who looked interesting – all sorts of nationalities—it was great fun—once there were eight different languages being spoken and we managed to communicate (Berkeley).

Berkeley returned home, charged by Mrs Vanderbilt Webb with the duty of organising a New Zealand chapter of the WCC. At the first meeting in 1965 at her home in Wellington, over 30 people ("Annual Report: WCC") from her circle of craft friends gathered; Berkeley was elected President, alongside a Secretary and five Committee members. Almost immediately Berkeley planned an international crafts exhibition, drawing on the many contacts she had made in New York. Twenty-seven countries sent objects for the exhibition in the Wellington Town Hall, with Canada and the United States contributing the majority; the interest this generated raised the membership to eighty. By the time of the second WCC Congress in Geneva in 1966, the New Zealand Chapter had 252 members. Berkeley was asked to address the assembly about her success as a recruiter, and she was appointed to the post of Director for a term of two years ("Annual Report: WCC").

Nan Berkeley dedicated herself to the viability of the WCC (Figure 27). She composed the New Zealand Chapter newsletters as well as typing, mimeographing and addressing many of them; she oversaw both local and international craft exhibitions; and she paid her own way for overseas travel (Pattrick “Nan” 4). She presided for six years, relinquished the role for health reasons, and stepped into the Presidency again for another three years when David Carson-Parker, her successor, was transferred to

Figure 27. World Crafts Council Membership Brochure c. 1977
This brochure, unlike previous subscription solicitations, was professionally printed. Membership fees at this time were $5 for an individual and $10 for a group. Ironically, for an organisation advocating for craftspeople, the textile artist on the back panel is not identified. She is Jenny Hunt whose image was captured by the Wool Board.

9 Nan Berkeley’s signature appears at the bottom of each of her WCC Newsletters. Rather than attribute each citation to her name I have referred to the article title and/or WCC Newsletter issue.
10 Dominion President: Mrs Nan Berkeley; Vice Presidents: Lady Dorothea Turner, David C. Parker; Dominion Secretary: Mrs J.M. Walmsley; Dominion Treasurer: Mrs Nan Berkeley; Trustees: Berkeley, Parker, Walmsley; Executives of the National Council: Mrs Mae Hodge (metal enamelling), Mrs J. Pain (fabric printing-weaving), Miss Miria Simpson (Māori crafts), Mr Bodley (woodwork), Mr Eric Flegg (potter), Mr P. Janssen (metal & glass work) ("Annual Report: WCC").
11 “The burden of secretarial duties continues to increase and we have relied on voluntary support to do the work. Over the years much of this load has fallen on Nan Berkeley for which the Council is very indebted” ("Future Outlook").
Australia (“David Carson-Parker”). Berkeley also dedicated herself to raising craft’s profile. In the Newsletter of February 1969 she wrote,

. . . it is our policy to encourage and support all the crafts, and we feel that the present high demand for good craft work of all types by the many craft shops throughout the country is largely due to our efforts of publicising the work and creating an ‘image’ of interesting, well-designed and constructed New Zealand craft work of many types (WCC Newsletter Feb. 1969 1).

The image and stature of craft was raised, in no small measure, through Berkeley’s vigorous exhibition programme (Figure 28 and 29). Ida Lough, a weaver, also credited the President with building self-confidence by cajoling makers to exhibit while quietly subsidising their participation. Lough noted that they had barely joined before Berkeley sent the work of 18 members to the Internationales Kunsthandwerk 1966 exhibition in Stuttgart, representing New Zealand alongside 30 other countries. Then, jn 1969 we figured again in Stuttgart, with 31 other nations . . . All this stimulus and satisfaction was due to one person alone—Nan Berkeley. It was she who found the openings for us overseas, wrote to us, chivvied and persuaded us, reminded us of datelines, packed the stuff, insured it, and got it (properly documented) to Stuttgart on time. We all paid something towards freight and insurance but none of us will ever know how much Nan paid from her own pocket for cartages, petrol, packaging, correspondence, and all the extras . . . (Pattrick “Nan” 4-5).

Figure 28. Cover, Auckland Festival Exhibition 1968 Catalogue
This international exhibition had 20,000 visitors with sales of $10,500. A 10% commission went to the Auckland Museum and a further 10% to the WCC. The hand motif on front and back covers was repeated frequently in New Zealand craft history.

Figure 29. Catalogue, World Crafts Council New Zealand Asian Exhibition 1970
The image, from the New Zealand section of the catalogue, includes artists who were not represented in the exhibition. They are: David Carson-Parker (fruit bowl); J. Walmsley (neckband); Tanya Ashken (pendant); Harry and May Davis (plate); Graeme Storm (bottle); Ida Lough (wall hanging).

13 The first national exhibit of the WCC New Zealand Chapter took place at the Auckland War Memorial Museum in March/April 1968. Individual members were allowed to display 6 pieces; groups (e.g. potters’ or weaving groups) could enter 12 pieces per group (“Exhibition 1968” 2-3).
Berkeley thought highly enough of New Zealand craft that she invested time, energy and private
resources into having it seen nationally and internationally. Her enthusiasm for overseas ventures did
craftspeople an important service. By removing their work from its national context, makers were made
aware of their strengths and weaknesses. A letter from the New Zealand Embassy in Bonn\(^\text{14}\) to the
Secretary of External Affairs in Wellington commented on the 1969 Stuttgart exhibit: “It compared more
than favourably with the British, Australian and Canadian exhibits for example, both in quality and
quantity, and the pottery items were better than most. The most striking feature of our exhibit, however,
was its comparative dullness in comparison with most others . . .” (“International Handicraft” 3).

Inadequate design skill was one of the Newsletter’s themes throughout the 1970s. Several
examples of critics’ concerns were noted. At his opening address at the Reserve Bank National Hand-
weaving Competition\(^\text{15}\) in 1972, a University of Auckland Professor of English, John Reid,\(^\text{16}\) stated:

The key element to my mind, lies in design. A craftsman, to produce a satisfactory pot or
piece of weaving, needs a good deal more than technical knowledge. I have seen some
excellent technical work spoiled by poor and unimaginative design, with dull patterns and a
colour sense that is either strident or absent. It does seem to me that unless there is some
instinct or training in design a good deal of weaving is wasted effort. . . . This is especially
important today in competing in a world in which machine-made goods are so well
designed and in which colour and pattern are often very highly imaginative (Reid 4).

Later in 1972, reporting on the selection of work by the Director of the Industrial Design Council,
Geoffrey Nees, for a National Craft Exhibition, Nan Berkeley wrote:

While successful, two issues were raised by the selector and a reviewer of the
Exhibition. . . . The first is the most important. It is a question of standards. For selection
purposes a double standard was assumed. On the one hand fairly stringent demands were
made as to quality and techniques of craftsmanship. In this respect New Zealand standards
are gratifyingly high. On the other hand the elements of form, design and decoration are
not as good. . . . It is apparent therefore that craft groups should look to organising seminars
and instruction in form and design. Your Council is hoping to organise some lectures to
help in this respect (“National Exhibition”).

Although the WCC consistently championed the need for design, its record shows only one
educational opportunity for makers: in conjunction with an exhibit of craft (22 December 1976 to 9
January 1977) at the Auckland Museum, a short course in basic design was offered (“News from”). The
fact that this course took place in Auckland\(^\text{17}\) meant that it was inaccessible to many craftspeople. The
design issue was not formally addressed until 1985, when the WCC’s successor, the Crafts Council, sat
down with tertiary technical institutes to draft a national strategy on design education. This topic will be
expanded upon later in the chapter.

The first mention of woodworkers came in the listing of members in June 1971. They included a
furniture craftsman (Mr W.E. Ward of Marton), three wood carvers, a loom builder (Mr J. Loman of
Hamilton)\(^\text{18}\) and a turner who made spinning wheels (Mr I. Nagy of Wellington) (“List”). The 26 men and
99 women who comprised the membership registered their activities as weaving and spinning, pottery,
neddlework, fabric printing, metal enamelling, jewellery, sculpting, and woodworking; in addition there
were fourteen groups and seven shops in the listing (Figure 30). Four women identified themselves with

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\(^{14}\) The writer of the letter is not identified but it was noted that Mr Clark at the Bonn Embassy visited the show
(“International Handicraft” 3).

\(^{15}\) A competition that served the Reserve Bank’s wish to install weaving on its premises (Abbott and Bourke 78).

\(^{16}\) John Cowie Reid was a founder of the Mercury Theatre in Auckland and a patron of the New Zealand Spinning
Weaving and Woolcrafts Society. He is credited with judging the competition to select a name for its publication: he
chose The Web (“The Web”).

\(^{17}\) Auckland and Christchurch had sub-chapters of the WCC.

\(^{18}\) Messieurs Ward and Loman were both married to weavers, thereby accommodating their wives’ loom needs.
Istvan Nagy, identified in New Zealand Spinning Wheels and their Makers by Mary Knox, was a Hungarian
immigrant. He sold his second spinning wheel in May 1969 and by 1975 had made over 900 wheels out of kauri
(“New Zealand Spinning Wheels”). By the mid 1970s Nagy was certainly a professional craftsman.
Māori crafts, one of whom was Miria Simpson. Simpson recounted her association with the WCC in an article outlining her facilitation of a Harakeke Weaving School in Wellington. The School began:

. . . following my chance meeting and continued association with craftswomen who were in the throes of forming a New Zealand Chapter of the World Craft [sic] Council; craftswomen well established in their own work—Nan Berkeley, ceramics and pottery; Dorothea Turner, spinning and weaving; Jenny Pain, whose specialty is the designing and screen printing of fabrics. . . . These women—and others in their groups—had long been aware of the absence from their midst of Māori crafts and crafts-people. Then, as I said, by chance we met and I became the bridge between their work and ours. Each of these women is also involved in teaching her craft to any one who is keen and enthusiastic; and they convinced me that I too should take up the torch and light the way to Harakeke Weaving School (Simpson).
It is noteworthy that there are names in the Members List that would go down in the annals of New Zealand’s art history: Zena Abbott (weaving), Doreen Blumhardt (pottery), Tanya Ashken (sculpture), Margery Blackman (tapestry), Ria Bancroft (sculpture), David (pottery) and Noeline (turning) Brokenshire, Anneke Borren (pottery), Ruth Castle (baskets), May and Harry Davis (potters), Mary Hardwick-Smith (potter), Ida Hudig (jewellery), Theo Janssen (sculpture), Ida Lough (weaving), Helen Mason (pottery), John Parker (pottery), and Mirek Smisek (pottery), to identify only a few. The group contained significant makers from its early days, makers who already were or aspired to be professional craftspeople.

By August of that year, when more groups had been added, the tally accounted for 2,000 craftspersons (“World Crafts Council NZ Chapter” 1), and the figure doubled by 1976 (“Membership”). This was in spite of dissent in the ranks that caused groups like the national Potters Association to resign its affiliation with the WCC in 1973 (WCC Newsletter Sept. 1973 5). The dissent concerned remittance of portions of the group’s membership fees to a national body that, it was felt, provided few benefits. This type of fragmentation dogged the community throughout its existence, and will be analysed in the next section.

Finance was always of concern to the WCC. From its advent, the New Zealand Chapter remitted almost $4 of each $5 membership fee received, to the WCC in New York (WCC Newsletter Nov. 1967 5). Berkeley had to request a dispensation from the international body to hold back funds for the purchase of paper and postage stamps (Patrick “Nan” 4). Revenue was minimal, and those who travelled to WCC Assemblies did so at their own expense. In late 1973, the Executive hoped that recent Australian Craft Council activity, documentation of which was sent to the Arts Council, would assist its own representations for financial assistance (“Future Outlook”). Berkeley reported in May 1974 about the consequences of attempts to raise money: discussions were held with the Arts Council Deputy Director (discreetly unnamed) regarding monetary support. But a proposal to establish an office that would coordinate New Zealand’s craft organisations as well as represent the country in the Asian World Crafts Council was fruitless. Disillusioned with the Government response, Berkeley made a suggestion to the WCC membership: “Perhaps in the future, it might be better if we join up with the Australian Crafts Council and become part of the Australasian Crafts Council” (“Proposed Central” 3). Given the profile of craft in Australia today, New Zealanders might have benefitted from following through with Berkeley’s aside.

In 1973, eight years after its founding, the New Zealand Chapter proposed modifying links to the international body. In recognising that one of its purposes was to establish closer liaison with and between the various craft media, it proposed “...that we should identify ourselves closer with the New Zealand scene. It is proposed therefore that we re-name ourselves—‘The New Zealand Crafts Council.’ This follows the pattern adopted in both Australia and more recently in England” (“Future Outlook”). The name change did not happen until 1977.

New Zealand continued its affiliation with the World Crafts Council. Delegates reported on their attendance at WCC Congresses in Switzerland (1966), Peru (1968), Ireland (1970), Turkey (1972), Canada (1974), Mexico (1976), Japan (1978), Austria (1980), Norway (1984) and Australia (1988). Nan Berkeley represented New Zealand in Switzerland, Peru, Turkey and Canada. For the latter, Berkeley approached the Government and Department of Māori Affairs to pay the fare of a representative of Māori crafts (Berkeley). Support was not forthcoming so she paid for Tuti (Tony) Tukaokao, a prominent carver from Tauranga (Figure 31), to travel to Toronto. In her 1989 reminiscence Berkeley described Tukaokao’s visit


20 New Zealand sent a delegate to this regional body of the World Crafts Council in 1969 (“Dear Members” 1970) and became one of its members when the Asian Regional Body was formally recognised on 18 August 1970 (Yeganegi). Australia joined the WCC in July 1971; prior to that date individuals joined and participated in the world body (Cochrane 119). In 1973 the Crafts Board of the Australian Council for the Arts approved funds to establish an Asian office at the Crafts Council of Australia (Cochrane 119). See page 47 for more on Australia.

21 Craft Australia was defunded in 2011 but six state craft agencies continue to function.
as a “great success,” including workshops and a generous sharing of knowledge. When the Canadian government, sponsors of the Congress, heard that Berkeley had paid for Tukaokao’s travel, they reimbursed the fare. Berkeley advised her membership that the Prime Minister, Norman Kirk, thanked her for facilitating Tukaokao’s Toronto visit (WCC Newsletter July 1975 2).

On her return to New Zealand, Berkeley admitted embarrassment to learn that the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council’s reluctance to provide monies was based on cognisance of the Māori community’s desire to choose a delegate. However, this had not been conveyed to Berkeley and she had invited Tukaokao because he was a member of the WCC (WCC Newsletter July 1975 2). Protocols aside, New Zealand’s refusal to support this endeavour is in contrast to the Australian situation: the Australian Council for the Arts allocated $20,000 for its newly-formed crafts council (see page 47) to participate in, and exhibit at, the WCC Toronto Congress (Cochrane 119).

Joining cohorts overseas was inspirational but the euphoria of being with like-minded souls disappeared when they returned home. In her August 1976 synopsis of the Mexican event Vivienne Mountfort, a Christchurch fibre artist and active craft supporter, wrote of her experience:

The New Zealanders who attended the WCC Conference in Oaxtepec slipped out of New Zealand and back again unheralded and not financed and farewelled but nevertheless enriched and rewarded by attending a Conference where strife and friction was non-existent —where the keynote was the handicrafts of the craftsmen of the world, something to give joy, to feed the soul of man and to renew man’s faith in himself and the future (Mountfort 3).

Mountfort’s plea at the end of her 1976 report would become the watch-cry of the craft movement and is pertinent today: “How can we bring the real value of encouraging the crafts to the notice of our Governments? How can we show that the state of the crafts in a country is the measure of the health of that country?” (Mountfort 3)

Internationally, the World Crafts Council operated in a straightforward manner until 1979 when Aileen Osborn Webb died. Her wealth had underwritten many of the costs of the organisation and its international gatherings. When that funding ceased, the membership had to scramble to maintain its integrity and secure finances from other sources. In the Spring 1984 issue of New Zealand Crafts, Carin Wilson (“Tenth”) reported on the Tenth General Assembly of the WCC (the 20th anniversary of its founding), outlining the machinations necessary to keep it alive. Wilson mentioned that the next

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22 Berkeley recounted details of the closing event in Toronto. I include this anecdote as an indication of Berkeley’s full embracement of her role as New Zealand representative. Tukaokao “insisted” that Berkeley wear a reed skirt, top and headband that he had brought for the gala dinner. She was forced to wear a pink slip underneath, because it was all she had, but she stuck to custom footwear. Her bare feet became cold during the lengthy dinner: “In desperation I wrapped each foot in one of the large white linen table napkins. When we finally emerged from the dining room there were dozens of photographers waiting, they [sic] were especially interested in the Māori costumes and one said to me, ‘Excuse me, madam, are the white booties traditional?’” (Berkeley).

23 The Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council was established in 1964 as an administrator of cultural funding under the Department of Internal Affairs (New Zealand: Dept. of Statistics 1969 1073).
Assembly would take place in Australia in 1988; subsequently the World Crafts Council disappeared from the national craft record. When the General Assembly was held in Sri Lanka in 1992 (World Crafts Council), the Crafts Council of New Zealand was struggling with its own existence. It is not surprising that little attention was paid to sending a delegate to the WCC at this time.

At a meeting at the Dowse Art Gallery on 5 March 1977 craftspeople gathered to discuss their future and affiliation with the World Crafts Council (“Dear Members” 1977). By May a Steering Committee had been established, a resource office was opened at 95 Courtenay Place in Wellington, a fund had been earmarked for a part-time secretary, and the compilation of a register of all craftspeople was proposed. The Steering Committee recommended that the Executive comprise three regional representatives, a representative from each of the largest craft media groups (the Spinners and Weavers, Potters, and Embroiderers) and eight floor members. The President would be appointed from this fourteen-person Executive (Pattrick “Report” 4). Dorothy Pascoe, the first President, stated in her first notes to the constituency:

It was made clear to me that, as we are the only body in New Zealand that covers all crafts, our help is needed in a wide and rapidly expanding range of activities. New Zealand craftwork is establishing a growing reputation overseas and we can expect a number of visitors, both individuals and group travel parties, with special interests (Pascoe “Dear Members” 1977).

Finally, in October 1977, approval of a revised constitution (Appendix 2) took place and the organisation’s name changed to the Crafts Council of New Zealand Inc. (representing the World Crafts Council) (“Revised Constitution”). Although the Crafts Council of New Zealand continued to follow the mandate of the WCC, its cursory links with the world organisation—that is, sending delegates to assemblies when funding permitted—meant that the full force of its parent’s ideology was not felt in New Zealand. The WCC’s purpose was:

. . . to maintain, strengthen and insure the status of crafts as a vital part of cultural life; to promote the human values inherent in the crafts and a sense of fellowship among the craftspeople of the world; to offer encouragement, help and advice to craftspeople and to foster wider knowledge and recognition of their work; to serve as an agency for cooperation between crafts organizations (“Purpose”).

The CCNZ attempted to maintain and strengthen the status of craft but, as will be seen, the emphasis on craft as a means of livelihood took precedence over the inherent human values of craft practice. Whereas practitioners were aware of those values, the CCNZ’s limited resources required concentration on practical support activities—exhibitions, workshops, publications—rather than ideological ones such as the promotion of craft as a societal benefit.

The maturation of craft in this country was seen to necessitate independence from the World Crafts Council. By 1977 the craft constituency had transformed from an aspiring collective, under the close direction of Nan Berkeley, to a confident group of professional makers. These future-thinking practitioners required a national body that was well-organised, had a physical presence and was dedicated to serving the needs of craft as an activity and craftspeople as legitimate contributors to the New Zealand economy. The Annual Report of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council in 1977 set out the official view of craft at that time:

It is realised that the craft movement in New Zealand has the potential to provide overseas earnings and the arts council [sic] is anxious to see the crafts become self-sufficient. This development would demand a high standard of training of the potential craftworker, incorporating the principles of good design with the teaching of technical skills. Discussions have been held regarding the reconstitution of the New Zealand Chapter of the World Crafts Council in an effort to make this a co-ordinated body, representative of the

24 These corresponded with the areas delegated to Regional Arts Councils – Northern, Central, and Southern.
interests of all major craftworkers in this country and credible in the eyes of other established organisations and government agencies (QEII Arts Council “Report 1977” 10).

This view prioritised: 1) craft as a professional revenue earner; and 2) professionals—“major craftworkers.” The creation of a “credible” agency and the appointment of administrators dedicated to craft—rather than craftspeople who administered when they could—were the next steps in raising the profile of New Zealand practitioners. Concurrently, the influence of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council on this agency permeated its history.

While organisations were important, the role played by individuals in the making of New Zealand's craft culture cannot be underestimated. Rather than accept conformity to prevailing practices, these people proposed progressive alternatives that held the possibility of change and advancement. For example, Jack Laird,25 in his capacity as an art lecturer in adult education, planned the Decorative Art and Design Centre at Palmerston North University College as a “focal point for potters, ceramic and decorative designers, and a research centre for materials and methods” (“News” 17).26 He also took the initiative to organise the first national craft conference, thereby offering a model for cross-disciplinary consultation.

The importance of Nan Berkeley's contribution to the history of New Zealand craft was acknowledged by its practitioners. In 1977 she was given the title “Founder, and Life Member” (“March 5th”) by her WCC peers, and in 1991 was awarded the Queen's Service Order for Community Service in the Queen's Birthday Honours List (New Zealand Gazette 1991). Berkeley was a passionate maker and craft advocate, and almost singlehandedly established a national craft organisation. While she did not possess the wealth of Mrs Vanderbilt Webb—she increased her pottery output and earnings in order to get to Montreux, Switzerland, in 1966 (Berkeley)—she was generous, both in time and financial assistance, to “her” organisation and its practitioners, readily acting as her nation's spokesperson on the international stage. Nan Berkeley had the personality and vision to advance New Zealand craft nationally and globally. She was one of the individuals who were pivotal to the stature of New Zealand crafts during the 1960s to 1990s.

A summary of the WCC's achievements places emphasis on: the establishment of a national umbrella organisation of craft in New Zealand, thereby bringing recognition to craft practice; the exhibition of national and international craft in major museums and galleries; the presence of New Zealand craft on the world stage by means of delegates at WCC congresses and through the display of work; and emphasis on design as a critical element of crafted objects. The WCC's major weaknesses were that it had not yet encountered an issue that galvanised membership regarding the worth of national advocacy; its lack of legitimacy made it powerless to influence education curricula; and although there were WCC members who were professional practitioners, especially amongst potters, the organisation was regarded as a hobby group as evidenced by its inability to attract funding. Even though the WCC's founder, Aileen Osborn Webb was “dedicated to the social cause of craft while radically professionalizing the field” (Alfoldy 56), the latter was a premature goal for New Zealand. The Crafts Council of New Zealand was the next step in advancing this agenda.

Crafts Council of New Zealand, 1977-1992

A new name (Figure 32) and a new constitution did little to dispel the old problems that were embedded in the organisation: fragmentation, financial concerns, and a dearth of educational opportunities in craft. In this section fragmentation and education will be re-visited and new issues detailed, alongside the Crafts Council’s achievements. The rise of a strong woodworking community also forms part of this history.

25 Laird's biography (Cape 47-54; Gibbs “Master”) records a career of actions that were in this category. Laird received an OBE for services to pottery in the New Year Honours 1984 (New Zealand Gazette 1984).

26 The Centre opened in 1962 and was demolished in 1967 to make way for new buildings for the Teacher Training College (Abraham).
Professionalism

When one considers the thousands of men and women in New Zealand using their leisure in working at their craft—hundreds making a living from their craft—some now exporting their wares, with thousands of dollars spent annually on the raw materials of craftwork, we move into the area of big business without the expertise of marketing or the organisation to act in a helpful or protective capacity. We hope with time that this will be a service the Council can provide (Pascoe 1977).

Pascoe’s message in the first Newsletter of the new Crafts Council described the craft environment in New Zealand. The organisation’s desire to help and protect that environment was admirable, but was it realistic? As was noted during the World Crafts Council years, some craft groups resisted joining an umbrella association whose affiliations were offshore. As transitional President (1977-1979), Pascoe had a formidable task before her as she tried to encourage acceptance of the Revised Constitution.

The Objects of the Constitution (see Appendix 2) were comprehensive and projected an organisation intent on raising standards by means of promotion, publication, education, resources, international exchange of practitioners, and exhibitions. The second object, “to promote, foster and develop crafts, arts and related fields of design in New Zealand,” acknowledged that the CCNZ embraced craft as art and craft as functional design, endorsing the proximity of craft, art and design. In addition, the presence of “design” in the CCNZ’s mandate gave priority to this missing element in some of the country’s crafted objects. The third object, “to encourage a high level of performance in crafts, arts and related fields of design and to recognise . . . special achievements in the field of crafts and related design” formalised the desire for standards, and the increasing professionalisation of craft. And while encouragement of achievement is one thing, recognition of achievement fostered dissent in the CCNZ throughout its existence.

The CCNZ record shows that the organisation ably maintained and fulfilled its Objects during its fifteen-year life span. Yet professionalisation created dissent and division. In light of this, it is worthwhile taking a slight detour to examine the notion of a profession from two sociological perspectives: 1) the character of craftspeople; and 2) the character of New Zealanders.

First, the character of craftspeople was identified succinctly in 1992 by Ron Roy, a Canadian potter. In a letter to the editor of Craft New Zealand (Winter 1992), Roy at first relished his “iconoclasm” but then recognised its negative connotations: “This proclivity for independent thought is part of the reason so many of us find it difficult to put aside our differences in order to work together.” Craft is rarely a team activity (quilting may be the sole exception) and craftspeople are either psychologically suited or conditioned to solitary labour: pottery or weaving, jewellery- or furniture-making is self-employment in its most literal definition.
Secondly, the New Zealand character. It is described in *The Encyclopaedia of New Zealand* (1966), which was edited by A.H. McLintock and said to be an “indispensable work of reference” (Bohan). The qualities of this character, which could be said to apply to the WCC and early CCNZ membership, were egalitarianism, pragmatism, inventiveness (Figure 33) and self-reliance. New Zealanders were artisans, of necessity: “Their dexterity may be explained by the fact that from earliest times they have perforce been accustomed to turning their hands to a variety of tasks which, in more populous societies, would be left to members of some special trade” (McLintock). They did not like exceptions, known in recent years as ‘tall poppies,’ nor did they appreciate criticism from outsiders. And, whereas by 1966 the population was more willing to embrace the visual and performing arts, critical judgment of those arts was hampered by lack of expertise, lack of opportunity and an unwillingness to tread on anyone’s toes.

Therefore, combining New Zealand character with a craftsperson’s character: New Zealand craft practitioners could be summarised as independent producers of well-crafted work, who expected all practitioners to be treated equally, had little tolerance for elitism, and were unlikely to be accepting of criticism by either local or overseas persons who were deemed experts. Concurrently, craft education was not esteemed. At the aforementioned 1963 Study Conference, a summary of a panel discussion on the teaching of crafts (chaired by Terry Bryant and James Coe) included: “The approach seemed to be that craftwork was only for the less bright in the ‘C’ forms; ‘A’ forms were not able to include it in their

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**Figure 33. Biddy of the Buller (d. 1899)**

Bridget Goodwin, known as Biddy of the Buller, worked as a gold miner alongside male peers. She is seen holding a pick axe and sluicing pan; a pipe is clenched in her teeth. In the foreground are cabbages in her garden. For this portrait she wears female garb—bonnet, apron and skirt—but she was known to wear moleskin trousers like her male colleagues. She stands on a bench, elevating her 4 foot height (*Dictionary of NZ Biography*). The fence is uneven sawn boards with a branch as cross-bracing. Goodwin represents the independent, inventive and practical New Zealanders described by McLintock.

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27 *Encyclopaedia* was produced under the authority of the New Zealand Cabinet (Hilliard 31). It was “an exercise in broadcasting knowledge . . . to give the general public a digest of information” (43). Gibbons and Graham note that the three-volume set sold quickly, suggesting that it was “well received” (78). I would argue that the assessment of the New Zealand character written by McLintock was, therefore, condoned. David Ausubel, an American psychiatrist and psychologist, wrote about his impressions of New Zealanders as a consequence of a year’s visit in 1957-58 (Ausubel). They coincide with McLintock’s.

28 “Strongly marked individuality or eccentricity are seldom in evidence among New Zealanders, and even where they do exist, the qualities are tolerated rather than appreciated” (McLintock: “Rule of Conformity”). “Though anxious to learn and fully aware that nothing is to be gained by pursuing self-sufficiency, [New Zealanders] are oversensitive to outside criticism, even though it be constructive. Visitors who comment unfavourably risk execution by the local press” (McLintock: “The Effects of Insularity”).

29 “… in New Zealand criticism has never reached a high standard for several reasons. Only a very few journals and periodicals devote space to discussion of literature and the arts, and the rates paid to contributors are not calculated to encourage writers to make themselves expert in any special branch of criticism. There is also the point that in a small country where, so to speak, everybody knows everybody else, there is a strong disinclination on the part of critics to hurt the feelings of personal acquaintances” (McLintock: “Place of the Arts”).

30 Matthew Kangas, writing for *The Crafts Report* quotes John Perrault, an American art critic, who has championed crafts in his writing. Perrault states that craftspeople are “too thin-skinned about negative criticism” (Kangas 38). New Zealanders are, therefore, doubly sensitive, innately and occupationally.
syllabuses because of the pressure of examination subjects on the time available” (Victoria University 11). And a passage from Professor Reid’s aforementioned address reiterated this view: “In the past, craft work was often regarded as the kind of thing given over to children who were not academically gifted, as a substitute for more rigorous and demanding disciplines; it was second-best, a manual activity, even, in the educational sense, a disguised therapy . . .” (Reid). These combined factors were not conducive to the professionalisation of craft.

Within the academic field of the sociology of occupations, a profession has certain parameters that qualify its practitioners to call themselves professional. Not all the parameters that apply to doctors or lawyers or social workers would apply to potters or weavers: for instance, doctors and lawyers, whose authority is legitimised by government, enforce adherence to a code of conduct and impose censure if that conduct is breached. Law and medicine notwithstanding, when an occupation applies the term ‘professional standards’ to its practice, that term implies the use of skills based on theoretical knowledge, education and training in those skills, and the existence of a professional association that organises its members (Kuper and Kuper 677).

Being of the class (as this term was used in the previous chapter) ‘craftsperson’ entails possession of skills, theoretical knowledge, education and training, including post-academic professional development. It does not legally require affiliation with a class association but membership has advantages: access to information, resources and exhibitions, and fraternity with other practitioners. New Zealand craftspeople wanted to raise the status of their class to a profession yet many were reluctant to embrace the full extent of what that entailed, including monetary and philosophical support for an umbrella organisation, the CCNZ, whose mandate was professionalisation.

The Australian experience was very different. Grace Cochrane’s history of the craft movement describes the formation of its national body in 1971 as “long-hoped-for” (Cochrane 118). The Craft Association of Australia (New South Wales Branch) was established in 1964 (113), and assumed a national coordinating role for associations formed, around that time, in all states. In order to secure funding from the Australian Council for the Arts, all states had to be represented; in 1973 the Craft Association of the Northern Territory was the last to complete this goal. The Crafts Council of Australia (CCA) was created in 1971, the first grant of funds was made in 1972, and the CCA was incorporated in 1973. The first President, Marea Gazzard stated: “Really, what we were concerned about was changing the environment from mediocrity to one of excellence. We wanted to get good people in different fields together so that there would be a cross-fertilisation of stimulation and interest, and more excellent craft would be the result” (Cochrane 113).

So, while Australians looked to the United States (Cochrane 113) and saw the merits of a successful organised national network, New Zealand weavers and potters had their own national organisations and saw no advantage in financially supporting personnel situated in Wellington pursuing broad aims. Evidence of the weavers’ preference to act on their own is recorded. In 1970 the New Zealand Spinning and Woolcrafts Council (NZSWC) formed with a mandate that stated: “Unless the council represents all spinners and weavers it cannot function efficiently. When all are banded together the council can then go to the highest level requesting help when it is needed” (Abbot and Bourke 24). The NZSWC sent a delegate to the 1970 Arts Council conference where remits on its behalf were approved (25). In 1979, with a name change to the New Zealand Spinning, Weaving and Woolcrafts Society, it joined the Associated New Zealand Arts Societies (32).

The rancour of the national associations of weaving, pottery and embroidery was acted out at an early meeting of the reconstituted Crafts Council, during which representatives expressed aversion to integration with craftspeople outside their discipline. The associations felt that “[f]ostering crafts activities as a whole, representing the needs of all craftsmen to government, seeking more generous funds to provide services to craftsmen . . .” (“Report on Meeting” 2-3) might mean a loss of autonomy or depletion of funds that could be applied to their own interests. The Crafts Council was “dismayed and saddened by such a narrow outlook, because it realises that while disension of this kind persists, the Arts Council and
Government are less likely to espouse the cause of craftsmen as a whole or to respond to their needs” (“Report on Meeting” 2-3).

The difference between Australia and New Zealand, that is cooperation/integration versus fragmentation, was centred on attitude, which I attribute to the independent New Zealand character. Not only was the professional association a stumbling block, other criteria of professional practice, such as competition, ranking and critique, were anathema to the New Zealand craftsman. Objection to these necessities of creative growth occurred repeatedly as the Crafts Council tried to move forward—these will be described shortly. Fortunately, convictions about standards and performance recognition, as embedded in the Constitution’s Objects, held firm. The Crafts Council’s 1978 Annual Report itemised key issues and reiterated the need for unity to address them:

We are constantly reminded of the many problems facing the Craftsman and needing attention. Sales Tax is one of the areas of current investigation. Education in the crafts, quality of souvenirs, bringing exhibitions and craftsmen to New Zealand and finding ways to send our talented craftsmen to observe or study overseas are all problems we must look at in the future. To do this however, with any measure of success there must be a close liaison with the practising craftsman and the existing craft bodies. This situation of mutual co-operation exists in a limited way with some of the national bodies (Pascoe “Presidents” 3).

Another issue of immediate concern was the duress placed on craftspeople by some local governments: cottage industry workshops were being zoned as manufacturing plants. Individual makers were shut down by local authorities because of the noise of woodworking or blacksmithing equipment, and the smoke of kilns. The Crafts Council supported craftspeople and urged local bodies to recognise the contribution made by craft to the well-being of society (Pascoe “Dear Members” 1978).

In 1979 Jenny Pattrick (Figure 34) was elected President. A well-respected jeweller who would later go on to chair the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council, Pattrick took office when strong leadership was needed to confront sales tax on craft. That year the Government imposed a 10% sales tax on domestic crafts and a 40% tax on decorative ware, thereby increasing costs to consumers and obliging makers to collect taxes. Pattrick’s first entry in the Newsletter iterated the immediate challenge. She acknowledged the economic and cultural growth being encouraged by Government, yet deplored the imposition of Sales Tax on craft, which she described as “... the crushing of small labour-intensive businesses epitomised by the professional craftsman” (Pattrick “Annual Report 1978-1979” 4). Pattrick asked that her constituency be proactive: “We must re-educate Government thinking. There are many of us and many avenues of influence. Every craftsman in New Zealand should work positively towards this end” (Pattrick “Annual Report 1978-1979” 4).

Pattrick urged craftspeople to refuse to register as “manufacturing retailers or licensed wholesalers” as requested by the Customs Department. The extent of the protests prompted instigation of an

![Figure 34. Jenny Pattrick](image-url)

Pattrick’s career includes handcrafted jewellery; Presidency of the Crafts Council of New Zealand, 1979-1981; Chairmanship of the QEII Arts Council, 1989-1994; and fiction author. This photograph, from the 1980s, shows her at her jeweller’s bench.
Interdepartmental Committee to look into the issue (Inter-Departmental Committee). In November 1979, thanks to submissions from the Crafts Council and significant others such as Hamish Keith, Chairman of the QEII Arts Council, and Jim Barr, Director of the Dowse Art Gallery, the Government scrapped the requirement that craftsmen register for sales tax if sales were under $50,000 per year (exports need not be included in this figure), to retailers, the public, and through exhibitions. Wholesale transactions were liable for tax. In addition the goods had to be made by hand (jigs and templates were forbidden), and the craftsman had to design and supervise manufacture of every element and could not incorporate manufactured components ("Sales Tax"). Furniture was exempt from sales tax under the Sales Tax Exemption Order 1979 (New Zealand Statutory).

A taxable designation for jewellers, who used findings (brooch pins and earring wires), continued and in 1980 the CCNZ negotiated with the Government to have some jewellery fixtures exempt; for others, a tax on small manufactured components was eliminated (Pattrick “Annual Report” 1980 1). The Crafts Council relished its success and used the opportunity to remind practitioners of the significance and value of its existence (Pattrick “Unified”). Meanwhile the New Zealand Spinning, Weaving and Woolcrafts Society, whose members participated in discussions with the Crafts Council regarding sales tax, made its own submissions to the Customs Department (Turner 9).

Professionalisation of the CCNZ included its physical manifestation. The Crafts Council began at 95 Courtenay Place, Wellington, and moved into larger premises alongside the QEII Arts Council at 110-116 Courtenay Place (Figure 35) in 1978. By July of that year the organisation had 479 individual

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**Figure 35. CCNZ Craft Centre, 110-116 Courtenay Place, Wellington**
The Crafts Council operated from this location from May 1978 to November 1985. The premises served as offices and resource library; the gallery held a number of exhibitions and averaged $2,000 per month in sales (“Annual Report: Craft Centre”).

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31 The Committee consisted of Mr P.J. McKone, Assistant Comptroller of Customs, Chairman; Mr G.H. Datson, Deputy Secretary, Department of Trade and Industry; Mr R.R. Cater, Assistant Secretary, Department of Internal Affairs; and Ms M.H. Sutch, Senior Investigating Officer, Treasury (“Questions” 1910).


33 Another political victory concerned government-owned television. In early 1979 Crafts Council News (“Use Our”) reported that the Broadcasting Council of New Zealand refused a request to air a BBC series entitled “The Craft of the Potter.” Lobbying by potters and the Crafts Council reversed that decision towards the end of 1979; “The Craftsmen,” another series, was later added to programming (“Notices: Craft Programmes”).
In 1980 the Minister for the Arts, Alan Hight, opened the New Zealand Craft Centre in Crafts Council premises (“New Zealand Craft Centre”). This retail outlet solicited quality hand-made merchandise from its members to showcase New Zealand craft and offer it for sale to tourists, corporate and government gift buyers, and the general public. This important segment of the CCNZ’s operations served as a necessary revenue-earner until 1992.

Also in 1980 the first craft conference, Crafts: Challenge for the 80s, took place in Hastings. Surprisingly, for an organisation that now boasted a membership of over 10,300 individual and group members (Figure 36), only 135 people attended the conference (“Report from Hastings” 2). Amongst the resolutions passed by the delegates was investigation of the CCNZ becoming a statutory body, and the prioritisation of education for the following year (“Report from Hastings” 3).

While the November 1980 Crafts Council News contained an announcement that, again, the spinners’ and weavers’ society was not supporting the CCNZ (Pattrick “Copy of a Letter” 5), there was mention of the creation of a New Zealand Society of Artists in Glass and the first group of woodworkers, the Canterbury Guild of Woodworkers. The latter, an incorporated society, started in 1978 with fourteen members. At its inaugural exhibit at the Canterbury Society of Arts (CSA) Gallery in October 1980—described in the CSA News as “possibly” the first woodworking exhibit in New Zealand (“Woodworkers Guild”)—sixteen woodturners, furniture makers, carvers, craftsmen in marquetry and inlays, a toymaker, and a chairmaker displayed work for two weeks and sold over 70% of the products. The contact person in Christchurch, Carin Wilson, stated: “The Canterbury Guild hope to encourage woodworkers in other parts of New Zealand to embark on a similar course, with a view to later forming a national body” (Wilson “Guild”).

<table>
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<th>Individuals</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Fees</th>
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Figure 36. Membership Figures and Subscription Fees

World Crafts Council and Crafts Council of New Zealand 1965-1991

Figures have been gleaned from newsletters, magazines, and annual reports. Peak membership occurred in 1984. During the years when group memberships were available, e.g. 1981, thousands of craftspersons were members of the WCC or CCNZ at next to no cost: a group could have a minimum of two people and an unlimited maximum. Increases in membership fees paid for the CCNZ’s increasing responsibilities.
In a recorded interview in March 2009, Wilson said he began woodworking in the early 1970s and had his first exhibition in Christchurch in 1974 (Personal 2009); Colin Slade, the chairmaker listed in the Guild’s roster, opened his studio in Christchurch in 1976 (Slade Personal 2008). Wilson, described by Slade as “a mover and shaker,” instigated the Canterbury Guild; and it was Wilson who was persuaded by Vivienne Mountfort (Wilson Personal 2009), when she stepped down as the Southern Regional Representative to the CCNZ, to stand for election in her place. Charismatic, energetic and articulate, Wilson became the first representative of furniture-making on the Crafts Council Executive.

The history of studio-made furniture will be covered separately in this thesis, but it is strongly connected to the history of the Crafts Council. Because woodworking did not have its own publication, Touch Wood, until 1983, the burgeoning evidence of the medium was apparent primarily in the Crafts Council’s publications. In addition, because both Wilson and Slade served in various capacities on the Executive, the Council became accessible to woodworkers with the appearance of resources, exhibitions and workshop tours by influential overseas makers; the Council’s newsletters, and subsequent magazine, contained exhibition announcements and reviews, photographs and artist profiles. And it was a two-way street: when the Crafts Council was seen to be interested in woodworking, woodworkers contributed and became visible. The relationship between the CCNZ and the woodworkers was not antagonistic because their aims coincided. The announcement of the Canterbury Guild’s first exhibition stated its objects, including: “emphasising high levels of performance and design in all aspects of woodcraft” (“Woodworkers Guild”); the CCNZ was similarly dedicated.

Professional Development and Resources

The appointment of the first full-time Executive Director, Christine Ross, in early 1981 was a measure of aspirations for professionalism and the growing stature of the Crafts Council organisation. Later that year, when Jenny Pattrick resigned at the end of her two-year term, Carin Wilson (Figure 37) was elected President. His agenda was made clear in his first message in the October 1981 issue of Crafts Council News. He stated that the immediate priorities of the Executive were: 1) craft education; 2) marketing; and 3) professionalism in craft. Within education he made special mention of the next generation: “I am also keen to see greater participation by young people in the craft movement, and would hope that we can encourage school leavers to consider the crafts as providing a viable alternative to other employment, so that a proper master-student relationship can be encouraged with some of our experienced artists” (Wilson “New” 1). Wilson was keen, too, to raise craft’s profile: “I would like to see us tackle . . . the assumption that craftspeople have a unique contribution to make to the development of our society at all levels, from leisure through to industry . . . ” (Wilson “New” 2). This mission was
facilitated to some degree by the Crafts Council’s location in Wellington: it was able to make itself known to government, ministries, and political parties, and advocate for craft face-to-face.

Wilson fulfilled his interest in young people. Almost immediately, the Crafts Council purchased space in the second volume (Figure 38) of Know-How, “. . . a book given to each school-leaver . . . . This presents an excellent way of informing young people about the crafts, suggesting they consider learning a craft, and informing them how to go about it” (“Miscellany”). Another noteworthy appointment recorded in October 1981 was Philip Clarke (Figure 39) as Resource Officer. Clarke, who had an MA in history and a diploma in library science (Ross “Changes” 3), applied his skills to the accumulated resources. During his tenure, which lasted until 1984 when he returned to Auckland, he was also involved with computerising the Crafts Council’s various rolls and lists and compiling inventories of educational opportunities for publication in New Zealand Crafts. He was later employed by Creative New Zealand and is now the Director of Objectspace in Auckland, one of the only galleries dedicated to craft, applied arts and design in the country. Clarke’s ongoing commitment has contributed to the visibility of craft as a distinct entity.

In January 1982, the second Craft Conference (Figure 40) took place at the University of Waikato (Wilson “Conference ’82”). Two hundred delegates travelled to Hamilton to consider the theme, Craft Education. Amongst a roster of workshops—dyeing, Korowai weaving, pit firing, photography, and health hazards, to name a few—was one on woodworking given by Kevin Perkins from Tasmania. Perkins, now considered a Master of Australian Craft, was the first of the international furniture makers brought to New Zealand. Furniture was now on the national agenda.

At the Conference, a special meeting was called to reflect upon the Crafts Council’s Constitution and refine its objectives. The draft document, presented at the next Annual General Meeting, retained only three provisions from the 1977 Constitution (Appendix 2):

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34 In New Zealand Crafts, Summer 1984/85 is a report about consultations with the Minister for the Arts, Minister of Customs, Minister of Employment, Minister of Trade and Industry, Minister of Overseas Trade and Marketing and the Director General of Education (“What’s Happening...Politics”).
36 Each year, the Living Treasures: Masters of Australian Craft programme, launched in 2005, recognises the work and careers of selected artists who are esteemed by their peers (“Living”).

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Figure 38. Cover, Know-How, Volume 2
The Crafts Council’s submission, under the category ‘Work and Leisure,’ described crafts as “an important part of New Zealand lifestyle and culture” (“Work”). The one-page description listed craft media, described crafts as potential employment (full- and part-time) and gave examples of where crafts could be learned.

Figure 39. Philip Clarke
Clarke was CCNZ Resource Officer 1981-1984.
a) To promote, foster and develop crafts, arts and related fields of design and to promote a high level of performance in crafts, arts and related fields.

b) To encourage and assist the education of craftspeople, artists and designers and to encourage education in crafts, arts and design through all levels of the education system.

c) To establish and maintain library, gallery, lecture demonstration and experimental facilities with such ancillary services as desirable or necessary and to print and publish any newspapers, periodicals, books, or leaflets that the Society may think desirable for the promotion of its object (“Special”).

The second major issue at the meeting was subscription fees (see Figure 36). They had not changed since 1979 and it was proposed that individual membership be raised to $20 and group membership to $30 (“Special”). In May 1982, the new rate of $20 per member was announced with a 10% discount for prompt payment and a $5 discount for every new member introduced; group subscriptions were eliminated (“Subscriptions”).

Subsequently, the Executive made changes to the Constitution in an effort to decentralise (Wilson “President’s”) and strengthen regional ties: regional committees which already existed in Christchurch and Hawkes Bay were expanded and more robust links were established with craft groups and guilds to stress the national mandate of the organisation. The Executive attempted to eliminate divisiveness by directly accommodating the dissenters. Grant Finch, Editor of the Crafts Council’s publications, announced the Executive Committee’s reduction from fourteen to nine elected members and the role it identified for itself: “. . . facilitating and helping others rather than directly undertaking activities itself” (Finch 5). By defining this role, in light of the Crafts Council’s constrained funding and minimal staff, it could advise members as to the viability of suggested projects.

July 1982 saw the dawn of a new era, the publication of New Zealand Crafts. Until then, CCNZ membership was kept informed via newsletter-type publications, whereas the new magazine was a professional journal about crafts in New Zealand and the voice of the Crafts Council; throughout its lifetime of eleven years (July 1982 to Summer 1993) it was the only magazine that covered all craft media. Initially edited by Grant Finch, it was published four times a year, but by 1984 the length of time between issues was seen to handicap announcements for events and exhibitions. Consequently the Newsletter was printed in the intervening months. A subscription to New Zealand Crafts was part of the annual membership fee, and as fees went up (they reached $41 by 1987) to cover the costs of activities demanded of the Crafts Council, members requested that the magazine be available separately. This did not happen until 1990.

The first issue of New Zealand Crafts (Figure 41) demonstrated its worth for disseminating information. It contained articles about funding and business practices: the various government agencies to which a craftsperon could apply for assistance and/or advice; a brief summation of the viability of a

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37 Later editors were Bob Bassant, Alan Loney and Peter Gibbs.
credit union for craftspeople; and details from the Press Statement of the aforementioned (page 33) Interdepartmental Committee on Sales Tax on Crafts. In addition there was an artist profile (Owen Mapp, ivory carver), an account of leather as art, and a discussion of an exhibition of tapestries at the Dowse Museum. Issue 2 reported that a Taranaki Guild of Woodworkers was being formed, and that another publication was scheduled: a Register of New Zealand Craftspeople which, when compiled, would be “the most valuable source of information on crafts in the country” (Clarke 8). At this time it was envisaged as a typed list but there were plans to computerise it along with the membership roll and mailing list, followed by directories of New Zealand craft shops, craft suppliers, and educational facilities and courses. In addition, the Crafts Council told its constituents that it was being vigilant about a Government move to re-impose sales tax on crafts, municipal council dealings with makers, task forces on tax reform and unemployment, the Ceramics Industry Review Committee, and the mooted Price Freeze Regulations (Ross “Executive Director’s” 5-6).

The third issue of New Zealand Crafts, December 1982 (Figure 19), looked more commercial—it had a glossy full colour photograph of a Gordon Crook tapestry on the cover. The magazine contained advertising, which brought in revenue as well as being of interest to readers—material and equipment suppliers, book store, summer workshop. This format was adopted and continued until the end. A new face appeared on the Executive, that of John Finn, one of the founders of the Taranaki Guild of Woodworkers, thereby balancing the mix of media. Also listed in December 1982 (and completed in the February 1983 issue of the magazine) was a listing of over 55 polytechnics, high schools, colleges and associations offering full- (only five) and part-time craft courses. Of these, twenty-two institutions, from Auckland to Invercargill, provided woodworking instruction varying from elementary to advanced.

Education

A significant event occurred in 1982 that would have an impact on the future of woodworking in New Zealand as well as the future of crafts generally. In that year Carin Wilson, still President of the Crafts Council, was successful in applying to the QEII Arts Council for a travel grant to enable him to visit art schools in the United States and Europe, talk to administrators and faculty about curricula, look at studio facilities and take photographs (Wilson Personal 2009). Wilson described his experience, firstly, as

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38 One detail worth noting: “In Nelson 64 full-time potters have an annual turnover of more than $1 million . . . . In the Canterbury area, 25 full-time woodworkers have an annual turnover of $1.25 million” (“Taxation”). I am grateful to Vic Evans for pointing out that the woodworking figure is abnormally high. In Scotts and Mounsey’s 1983 survey, the majority of woodworkers (n=78) earned $3,000-3,999 with only one earning $20,000 and over (Part 3, Table 4B).

39 A temporary reversion to the newsletter format.

40 The Executive at the time consisted of four potters, two fibre artists, one glass artist, a publisher, and a Māori artist, plus Carin Wilson and John Finn as woodworkers (“Executive”).
it related to his medium, furniture. He was gratified by the support and encouragement he received both personally and for craft education. He visited two important practitioners:

One of the most influential, I would say, furniture makers of that time was a man named James Krenov who'd written two and subsequently a third beautiful book on a way of working with wood which resonated strongly with many of us who were interested in working with wood as a material at that time. I'd written to James and said, “I want to come and see the school that you’re working with,” which is the College of the Redwoods in Northern California. . . . through James and another English artist who I talked to, Alan Peters, we were able to grow the sense of a community of woodworkers and designers (Wilson Personal 2009).

Both practitioners agreed to come to New Zealand to realise Wilson’s “. . . vision for resourcing . . . wood skills and good design and furniture design” (Wilson Personal 2009). James Krenov came for July and August of 1983. Travelling on a Fulbright Scholarship, he gave workshops in Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch and public lectures in Rotorua, Hawkes Bay and Nelson. “Some 130 woodworkers with a very broad range of skills and interests attended the workshops and around 700 people crammed the lectures, often accepting seats on the floor or standing around the walls” (Wilson “Some”). Most of the major furniture makers—James Dowle, Jimu Grimmett, Humphrey Ikin, John Shaw, Colin Slade41 —credit Krenov and his visit as being influential. By 1984 Auckland and Wellington had Guilds of Woodworkers, and the magazine Touch Wood (Figure 42) was launched. Another Crafts Conference, held at Lincoln College in January 1984 (“Conference ‘84”) and whose theme was Design, brought Alan Peters, the prominent British woodworker, as a guest speaker. Peters’ visit (sponsored by the British Council), included workshops in Christchurch, Nelson, Wellington, Auckland and Whangarei. The Peters and Krenov visits were evidence of the energy of furniture-making at the time. Wilson was instrumental in making these visits possible.

Figure 42. Touch Wood: A New Zealand Journal for Woodworkers
The cover of the first issue of the magazine, November 1983, shows an image of a box by Howard Tuffery to accompany an article about him. Noeline Brokenshire, the editor and primary writer, inaugurated the journal simply because she felt there was a need (Brokenshire Personal); it was published in Christchurch three times per year (“Craft Notes”). Noeline and David Brokenshire’s names appear on the 1971 WCC Membership List. They knew about Craft Horizons, the American craft publication affiliated with the WCC and Aileen Osborn Webb—New Zealand Chapter newsletters contain subscription forms for Craft Horizons. In addition, David’s pottery career ensured their receipt of New Zealand Potter. A woodturner herself, Noeline addressed the need for a magazine for woodworkers.

Wilson identified a second key benefit of his overseas trip, which ultimately affected the entire craft community: “I was able to join another dialogue, the dialogue about design. So, on the one hand there was this dialogue about skills and practices about working with wood as a material and the other dialogue was about the design process. And it was very important for us that we were able to marry those two approaches” (Wilson Personal 2009). When Wilson returned to New Zealand after his eight-week journey through five countries, he received another grant to write up his report for the Minister of the Arts, Alan Higget. This was passed on to the Director-General of Education, William Renwick, thus

41 These men talked about the influences on their careers during personal interviews in 2009, 2010 and 2011. See list of interviews (Figure 9).
fuelling the process to establish the curriculum that launched the certificate and diploma programmes in craft design in 1986 and 1987.

By the time Wilson embarked on his trip, the evidence that New Zealand needed advanced education programmes in craft and design had mounted. As noted previously, criticism of work singled out design as the major failing. High school and adult education courses were strong on technique but the country’s ingrained do-it-yourself ethos as well as scattered population meant that most people learned by doing. A Vocational Training Council (VTC) questionnaire sent out in 1982 produced a report (Scotts and Mounsey) the following year.

The research project that led to *A Study of the Craft Industry Craftspeople and their Training Needs* had two objectives: 1) to gather data regarding existing training for craft workers; and 2) to investigate the industrial context of that training (Part 1: 3). The research was conducted by means of a postal survey of craftspeople, a postal survey of craft retail outlets, a Māori-specific study, and feedback/discussion meetings regarding the results of the surveys. The surveys and meetings were nationwide (Part 1: 5). Six hundred people met the criteria: “designed and made craft items, predominantly by hand and using raw or partially processed materials; and usually earned $2,000 or more per year from the sale of these items” (Ross “From … CCNZ-VTC”). The responses showed that 55% were male and 45% female with the majority in the 30 to 50 years age range (Figures 43 and 44); 50% were potters, 14% woodworkers, 9% weavers (Figure 45). The survey’s authors cautioned that these figures were based on income generation, not the prevailing distribution of media in the craft population.43 The consequences of this methodology are shown in Figure 45: whereas the number of weavers in the VTC study is 60, the NZSWWS had 7,817 members in the same time period (Abbott and Bourke 36). With respect to education and/or training, 28% had a diploma/degree related to their craft (Figure 46). Three-quarters of the 600 participants were self-taught, while 43% had attended craft classes, 21% had sought out private tutoring, 19% had received on-the-job training, and 25% had never attended a class or course. A large number, 65%, wanted additional training in their medium but half of those said it was not available. 91% worked twenty plus hours per week and 56% stated that craft sales accounted for half or more of their family income; only 5% earned $15,000 or more from sales of their work (Figure 47 and 48). In addition to the questionnaire, the VTC, assisted by the Crafts Council, arranged twenty-seven meetings throughout the country to give feedback and hear from craftspeople face-to-face.

A survey of Māori craftspeople was conducted separately because of income discrepancies. Of the 600 craftspeople who met the criteria of earning $2,000 or more, only 20, or 3% (Scotts and Mounsey Part 1: 14), were making Māori craft items. Knowing that Māori craft practice is socially embedded, the researchers reverted to interviews in selected communities and agencies in the North Island. Scotts and Mounsey concluded that because Māori crafts are more culturally than commercially related, training be tailored to Māori-specific needs (Part 4: 15).

The VTC Study is remarkable for its breadth, rigour, and cultural sensitivity, and the comprehensiveness of its conclusion. The latter is included, in full, in Appendix 3. To summarise: 1) craftwork is vocational and avocational; 2) income is insecure and generally low; 3) sexual discrepancies exist in media and incomes; 4) desires to increase production and, therefore, sales are limited by low returns and income, lack of resources and concurrent obligations; 5) marketing nationally and internationally entails difficulties and frustrations; 6) skills training is wanted, including business training, and the training of others (i.e. side-by-side learning) is considered essential but depends on compensation for the trainer.

The discussion of female participation warrants elaboration in its bearing on the Crafts Council. The researchers point out that while women might be stereotyped as hobbyists, their household responsibilities limit time commitments and access to resources. Therefore, the prospect of increasing

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42 2,540 questionnaires were sent out, 1324 were returned and 600 were deemed qualified (Scotts and Mounsey Part 1: 7).
43 “Fabric and fibre crafts in particular are extensively practiced, but yield only small, or no cash incomes for many practitioners” (Scotts and Mounsey, Part 1: 10).
Figure 43. **Distribution of Craft Practitioners by Gender and Medium**
The gender distribution is almost even in pottery; in other media the usual gender preferences are evident i.e. women dominate in textiles and men in woodwork.

Figure 44. **Distribution of Craft Practitioners by Age and Gender**
The concentration of practitioners in the 30 to 50 age group reflects several factors: the longevity necessary for skill development to a proficiency to earn one’s living; the need to accumulate capital to dedicate self, equipment, space and materials to pursuit of this means of livelihood; and awareness of lifestyle choices (Scotts and Mounsey Part 3: 9). I would also argue that people in middle age have been exposed to more options. Few New Zealand youth, at the time of the VTC survey, had been exposed to craft as an educational or vocational option.
Figure 45. Distribution of Craft Practitioners by Medium
The VTC Survey, done in the early 1980s, preceded the burgeoning of glass in Whanganui and the popularity of jewellery curricula at polytechnics. New Zealand is currently known internationally for its practitioners in these media.

Figure 46. Sources of Craft Training amongst Craft Practitioners
Whereas 600 practitioners qualified to be included in the VTC Survey, 1500 training sources were identified. The high percentage of self-taught practitioners explains the lack of design training.
Figure 47. **Income in 1982 Financial Year**
Although the criteria for inclusion was earnings of more than $2,000 in the last financial year, Scotts and Mounsey asked the qualifying participants about income in the previous five years. As a result, 7% of practitioners reported income of less than $2,000 sometime in that five-year period. The median disposable income for 1982 was $27,800 (Statistics NZ New Zealand Now 80).

Figure 48. **Comparison of Income in 1982 Financial Year for Potters and Woodworkers**
The comparison of these two media is almost identical except that more woodworkers had one or more years in which they earned less than $2,000 in the last five years; and fewer woodworkers earned in the second largest financial category. Pottery was the most viable craft practice at the time. Scotts and Mounsey caution that income reporting is usually understated (Part 3: 21); 27 of the 600 respondents refused to disclose income.
involvement to a professional level necessitated increased burdens that were not faced by male practitioners. Female fibre artists, for instance, could not expect just reward for their labour but the activity itself meshed well with domestic obligations; involvement with similarly-engaged women with similar home duties was a creative outlet that had its own rewards. Using Scotts and Mounsey’s phrase, weavers were “systematically disadvantaged vocational craftspeople” (Part 1: 20) whose socially-dictated way of life better suited membership in the New Zealand Spinning, Weaving and Woolcrafts Society than the CCNZ. In other words, because female weavers knew the domestic constraints of women, NZSWWS members avoided challenges to existing parameters. The researchers suggested that this situation, for all craftswomen, required particular attention if parity was a community goal.

Until the VTC Report, education advocates relied on anecdotal justifications for their concerns. Along with Carin Wilson’s overseas visit and report to the Minister of Education, the issue now had quantitative backing to move to the national stage. The Crafts Council championed the cause but, within its ranks, consensus was again, elusive. Jenny Pattrick argued for craft education, exhorting craftspeople to be more vocal. She encouraged potential students of crafts and their parents to demand instruction at the tertiary level:

> It is surprising, in a country where crafts are so strong, that the demand for Diploma courses in crafts is not stronger. Perhaps those of us who have learnt our craft the hard way—out of books and by trial and error—are suspicious of the ease of Art School training. We should not be. The strong grassroots tradition here, combined with a good art school training, could, in the next generation produce young New Zealand craftspeople of outstanding calibre (Pattrick “Where” 12).

The announcement of a vocational Crafts Education Programme was made in June 1985 by the Minister of Education, Russell Marshall:

> The potential value of the craft industry for employment and as a major earner of local and overseas funds is recognised in an important feature of the Budget education package, with the funding of Certificate courses in craft education at 10 technical institutes or community colleges. . . .There are few opportunities for people to pursue vocational education or training in crafts in this country, yet the overseas and local earning capacity is growing rapidly, with current earnings estimated by the Crafts Council at $40 million each year (Minister of Education).

The largely economic thrust of this statement will be discussed later in the thesis. Suffice to say, the Minister’s Press Release stated that the instigation of craft programmes was aimed at improving the country’s export earnings rather than addressing practitioners’ or potential practitioners’ needs or promoting the values inherent in the crafts.

Following the announcement, a Crafts Education Advisory Committee (CEAC), comprising representatives of the Department of Education, Association of Teachers in Technical Institutes, the Technical Institutes Association, Ngā Punawaihanga (Māori Artists and Writers Association), the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council and the Crafts Council was established to advise the Director of Education on the implementation of its initiative. Wilson and Campbell Hegan, both former Presidents of the Crafts Council, sat on its behalf. Subsequently, two co-opted members, one of whom was the President of the New Zealand Society of Industrial Designers, were added (Codd et al. 21). This addition addressed Wilson’s concern that design be present at the table.

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44 “This report [VTC Study 1983] was to provide the Crafts Council of New Zealand with evidence to support their claim than an institution for craft education in New Zealand was urgently needed” (Codd et al. 16).
45 Scotts and Mounsey reported opposition in the meetings phase of their study. It came from two groups: successful craftspeople who believed that learning the hard way was character building; and rural practitioners whose crafts were embedded with their alternative lifestyle values (Scotts and Mounsey Part 5: 4).
47 World Crafts Council purpose (page 43).
48 The President is not named in Codd et al. An email from Ray Thorburn, who represented the Department of Education on CEAC, identified the President as Monika Vance (Thorburn “Re: New”).
At the first meeting of the CEAC on 2 August 1985 it was recommended that six technical institutes—Carrington, Hawkes Bay, Southland, Wairaki, Waikato, and Wanganui—be invited to submit curricula for commencement in 1986, with another four scheduled for the following year. In fact Nelson, Northland and Otago also commenced in 1986 with Christchurch and Parumoana49 coming on board in 1987 (Figure 49). They all offered a two-year Certificate in Craft Design, with courses,

Figure 49. Location of Polytechnics offering Craft and Design Training

Eleven locations, distributed throughout the North and South Islands, offered the Certificate in Craft Design. The Diploma Course was offered in Auckland (Carrington), Rotorua (Wairiki), Hamilton, (Waikato) and Nelson.

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49 Parumoana Community College became Whitireia Community Polytechnic in 1989 (“Our History”).
. . . built on a broad base of art, craft and design education that includes a core of knowledge of the historical origins of craft forms, their purpose and the social and cultural values they are accorded; media skills and workshop/studio experience; professional skills including marketing, promotion and relevant business methods and procedure (“Craft Education” 2).

This plan of action was not what Carin Wilson recommended. He based his report around observations of effective craft education in England, Scotland, Ireland, the United States, Scandinavia, and Australia (Wilson “That lyf”). He had proposed a central “College of the Crafts” (Wilson “Guest Editorial”), but this approach was ultimately dismissed by the Department of Education. Preference was given instead to distributing craft design education throughout the country in facilities that already existed. Instead of consolidating resources in one institution, the Ministry of Education spread them among eleven polytechnics. This approach stretched financial and teaching resources. Prophetically, Wilson wrote in 1988, “[i]t’s my bet that the next five years will see only four or five institutions promising their students something more than general competence, and it will take longer than that for the community to see tangible evidence of the value of these courses” (“That lyf”).

The Crafts Council was not able to rest on its laurels once the programmes were in place. Executive Meeting notes in May 1986 stated that lobbying was necessary for Stages II (two-year Diploma Course) and III (fifth-year Post Graduate Course) of the Craft Design Course (“What’s Happening…May Executive”). 30 Four months later the Ministry of Education announced that it lacked the expected funding for the second year of the certificate (Stage I) programme (“What’s Happening…Craft Design”). The Crafts Council joined forces with the Arts Council to seek reinstatement. The Ministry fulfilled its commitment to a two-year Diploma in Craft Design at Carrington, Nelson, Waiairiki and Waikato in 1988, but disbanded the Crafts Education Advisory Committee. However, the Crafts Council was determined to remain vigilant: “Though the loss of a policy conduit in the Education Department is to be regretted, CCNZ will continue to keep open the various avenues available for lobbying purposes” (“And More News”). It interceded again in 1990 when the Ministry cut funding to the Community Education sector, thereby depriving craftspeople of some of their livelihood from teaching and the general public from crafts-skill courses (Newsletter July 1990 1).

Standards and Marketing

One Crafts Council initiative, more than any other, raised the ire of its membership. With 75% (see Figure 46) of makers being self-taught, they were inexperienced with the critique process that forms part of assessments at art and design schools. In addition, the country’s aversion to “individuality or eccentricity” (McLintock) arose over the creation of the Index of New Zealand Craftworkers.

As demand for New Zealand crafts increased, the Crafts Council was required to answer additional national and international queries relating to practitioners whose work was on file in its Resource Centre. It advised its membership about an Index to promote New Zealand craft and its makers, facilitate client/maker liaison, provide a resource for everyone from curators to student essay-writers, and update and expand the slide library (“Crafts Council…Index”). Looking at British and Australian precedents, New Zealand sought application from all professional craftworkers whether they were members of the Crafts Council or not. Initially a selection panel would be appointed to judge each medium, but with the Index envisaged as an annual occurrence, a panel of six would consider all media in subsequent years.

While the Crafts Council undertook the Index project in 1986 with the best of intentions, the outcome was related with tongue-in-cheek humour by then President, Colin Slade: “My 1986 ended with a nagging toothache which culminated on New Year’s Eve with the removal of two of my favourite molars. The New Year began with the results of the selection for the Crafts Council’s Index of New Zealand Craftworkers. I’m not sure which experience was more painful” (Slade “Message”). Lani Morris,
a fibre artist, explained that the Index was created to identify exemplary practitioners. Yes, it was elite, because the intention was to assemble “the best,” whose work demonstrated development and consistency over time. Not only would the public learn who were New Zealand’s best craftspeople, but craftspeople could use the Index as a quality standard. Morris provided constructive criticism to those who were rejected: the panel had based its selection on the basis that excellence was epitomised by unity, originality and personal style, presented in a highly professional package (Morris 27). A sizeable proportion of the entries, about 30%, were rejected for poor presentation including amateur photos, inadequate slide views, and less-than-impressive CVs and written notes.

When the selection was announced, many senior craftspeople who had exhibited, won awards and sold their work for years, were not included. Copious ‘letters to the editor’ appeared in the Winter 1987 edition of New Zealand Crafts. Alan Preston (jewellery), Simon King (jewellery), Ken Sager (woodturning), and Holly Sanford (glass) bridled at the results. It did not matter that the selection panel admitted that this was the first Index and future refinements would be made to the process. The prevailing resentment boiled down to the use of comparison and ranking. Leonie Arnold (clay) in a letter in the spring of 1988 objected on the grounds of personal bias (Arnold). Jack Laird resigned from the Crafts Council in a letter dated 20 May 1987: “I find the principles & philosophy which inform my life as a craftsman are totally opposed to the present policy of the Crafts Council in its ‘indexing’ of craftspeople, which is elitist, exclusive, and of dubious authority” (Laird).

Crafts Council members did not want ‘tall poppies,’ in the Index or exhibitions. Terry Keenan, commenting on his rejection from the first Crafts Biennale sponsored by Winstone Limited and organised by the Crafts Council, offered a solution: “in the future all pieces submitted be accepted” (Keenan). Amongst craftspeople whose confidence and stature were the result of an egalitarian climate, creative advancement by means of critique—whether it be of work or presentation—was not welcome. Nevertheless, the Crafts Council went on to produce four Indexes, incrementally adding names with each edition. By the fourth, in 1990, eighty-six craftspeople were represented of which seventeen were woodworkers in a range of forms (Figure 50). The first Index (Figure 51) contained five furniture makers—Humphrey Ikin, Vic Matthews, Colin Slade, John Shaw, and Marc Zuckerman; by the fourth Index, James Dowle, David Haig, Kazu Nakagawa, Jürgen Thiele and David Trubridge were added.

The First Craft New Zealand Yearbook (Figure 52) published in 1992 could be seen as a sop to the naysayers. It was described by its editor, Peter Gibbs, in more positive terms: The First Craft New Zealand Yearbook brings together the best, most creative craftspeople who want to market themselves, and presents them in an accessible way. The Yearbook put the ball clearly in the court of the craft community, forcing them to take individual responsibility for collective marketing. Inclusion carried a price tag . . . . In many cases, the fee has been sponsored by businesses and support groups for craft . . . (Gibbs “Marketing”).

51 Preston: “I would not have applied for this index had I known it would be so restrictive, particularly as the chosen elite, an elite of none in some cases, now become the next orchestra to play as their colleagues are sent to the cultural gas chambers.”; King: “When one rejection states that the craftsperson has demonstrated extremely high standards of professionalism and technical skills, it becomes obvious that some panels saw this not as an index of craftspeople, but of artists.”; Sager: “I do not consider a woodturning can be accurately judged solely from a colour slide.”; Sanford: “... the numbers of craftspeople selected for the index is so minimal as to be insulting to the credibility of creative craft in New Zealand” (“Letters: Index”).

52 For instance, an objection from David Russell that leather had not been included was subsequently addressed; Slade’s New Year 1987 observation, that a minority had submitted slides, could be rectified by making slides compulsory (the message was vague for Index 1).

53 Auckland Museum 28 August to 13 September 1987. Almost 300 pieces were submitted but only 62 were acceptable to the judge Udo Selbach, an Australian printmaker (Hegan 10).

54 The Yearbook was actually the Summer 1992 issue of Craft New Zealand. Containing Gibbs’ editorial, introductory essays by Helen Schamroth and Lesleigh Salinger, identification of the selection panel, profiles and images from 100 makers, and advertising, the issue was a stand alone marketing document.

55 Gibbs noted in his preface to The Yearbook: “many craftspeople have eased into a welfare state mentality, where they expect their needs to be provided for by outside agencies” (Gibbs “Marketing”).

56 One of the handicaps of the Index was that it was a virtual list in the sense that a makers’ list and set of their slides were housed in Crafts Council offices in Wellington.
## Index of New Zealand Craftworkers

### Ceramics (27)
- Pamela Annsouth
- Raewyn Atkinson
- Andrea Barrett
- Christine Bell-Pearson
- Jon Benge & Gill Gane
- Anneke Borren
- David Brokinson
- Peter Collis
- Melanie Cooper

### Glass (9)
- John Croucher
- Lyndsey Handy
- Rena Jarosewitsch

### Jewellery (17)
- Paul Annear
- Joan Atkinson
- Kobi Bosshard
- Hamish Campbell
- Michael Couper
- John Edgar

### Leather (1)
- Marie Potter

### Textiles (15)
- Anita Berman
- Malcolm Harrison
- Susan Holmes
- Minakshi
- Vivienne Mountfort

### Wood (17)
- Alan Brown
- James Dowie
- Ian Fish
- David Haig
- Jack Hazlett
- Humphrey Ikin

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<td>Richard Parker</td>
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<td>Brian Gartside*</td>
<td>Anne Powell*</td>
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<td>Jean Hastedt*</td>
<td>Darryl Robertson</td>
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<td>Leo King*</td>
<td>Jan White*</td>
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<td>Merilyn Wiseman*</td>
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<td>Vic Matthews*</td>
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<td>Roland Munro</td>
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<td>Kazu Nakagawa</td>
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<td>Mark Piercy</td>
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<td>John Shaw*</td>
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<td>Colin Slade*</td>
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* selected for the first Index, 1987

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**Figure 50. Index of New Zealand Craft Workers, Accumulated List**

There were four selections for the Index at yearly intervals from 1986 to 1990. Margaret Belich noted in her Executive Director’s Report of 1987/88 that CCNZ membership had been surveyed and while the consensus was to retain the Index, it was felt that improvements could be made with procedures and promotion (“Report” 4).
Gibbs was telling craftspeople to take initiative rather than complain. Sadly, the Yearbook, a product of the Crafts Council’s constitutional mandate to publish, was one of the last attempts at perpetuation by the Crafts Council. In its lifetime its achievements amounted to a creditable publication portfolio. In 1980 Crafts as a Livelihood (Figure 53), a kitset of booklets on the business of being a craftsperson, was printed and enthusiastically received. It was reprinted and always available until 1987 when cost-cutting measures curtailed its production. Craft Buyer’s Guide 1989, including the listings of over 375 craft shops and galleries throughout the country, accompanied the Winter 1989 issue of New Zealand Crafts. In 1993 Craft Galleries of New Zealand (Figure 54), a compendium of 38 retailers containing colour photos of premises and artists’ work, constituted the major portion of the last issue of Craft New Zealand. The Crafts Council served its constituency well in providing resources and information.

Figure 51. Poster, The Human Touch (left) This exhibition was dedicated to craftspersons who had been selected for the Index of New Zealand Craft Workers. It was staged in Rotorua to coincide with the CCNZ’s Annual Meeting in January 1990. The image is a quilt, Canoes with Red Interior, by Malcolm Harrison.

Figure 52. Cover, The First New Zealand Craft Yearbook Priced at $14.50, this full-colour compendium of 83 craft artists and one cooperative was a professional marketing tool. Each maker’s description included the galleries that represented them. Selectors were identified as Amy Brown, Humphrey Ikin and Peter Gibbs. Advertisements for galleries and suppliers book-ended the artists’ pages.

Figure 53. Crafts as a Livelihood (left) The $8 package contained eight booklets: Timeline, Managing the Money, Marketing Your Craft, Running a Cooperative Crafts Shop, Working Co-operatively, Legal Structures for Businesses in New Zealand, Training, Getting out of a Mess. All were written by Bevin Fitzsimons except Training, which Fitzsimons co-author with Peter Creevey. The kitset was reproduced and in stock from 1980 until mid 1987.

Figure 54. Craft Galleries of New Zealand Another CCNZ marketing initiative, Craft Galleries contained descriptions of 37 galleries and one trade fair. The majority were situated in Auckland (12), Wellington (9) and Nelson (5). The most northerly was the Warkworth Craft Gallery Cooperative; the most southerly the Crafts Council Gallery in Dunedin.
Just before moving on to its last days, it is appropriate to look at the physical entity of the Crafts Council at its peak. On 19 November 1985 Prime Minister David Lange opened the Crafts Council’s premises at 22 The Terrace in Wellington (Figure 55). It was the realisation of a dream. The Council was in its own high-visibility space in the business centre of Wellington. The two-story layout adequately housed administrative offices, meeting room, library, resource centre and custom-designed gallery (Figure 56). Showcase II, the opening exhibition, had been assembled at the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a display of work suitable for purchase for New Zealand ambassadorial offices and residences abroad (“Grand”). After shifting to and from various locations since 1977, the new space was described as “tangible evidence of the growing regard in which the crafts are held” (“Historic Occasion” 15).

By the end of the 1980s the Crafts Council could feel satisfied by two decades of achievements. It had earned a reputation worthy of its being located on The Terrace, at the heart of the nation’s politics, economy and bureaucracy. This reputation was a result of good works, as well as cajoling the CCNZ membership to raise its sights from making work that was mere personal expression to incorporating professional standards in that expression. For existing practitioners, workshops, publications and the Index fuelled the improvement to the degree that merit assessment was embraced as necessary by those serious about a career as a craft master. For future generations, the potential for ongoing excellence in pottery, glass, fibres, woodworking and metals had been instituted throughout the nation. Design, an imperative touted throughout the WCC/CCNZ history, would soon be in evidence in the output of graduates from the certificate and diploma courses; New Zealander’s long-recognised manual and technical abilities would be enhanced by knowledge of design theories and methods. In summary, the Crafts Council of New Zealand’s dogged pursuit of standards benefitted its constituency and justified its acceptance as craft’s voice.

Demise of the Crafts Council, 1992-1993

In July 1992 the CCNZ was placed into voluntary liquidation (Gibbs “From”). The beautifully restored historical landmark (Figure 57 and 58) that housed the incorporated company known as the Crafts Council of New Zealand from 1985 to 1992 closed its doors. This section looks at the financial situation that led to that ‘black day in July,’ the people and attitudes that were responsible, and the consequences for the tangible evidence of the Council’s existence, its publications and gallery.

Crafts Council documents make explicit the continually straitened finances of the organisation. As was mentioned previously, the WCC New Zealand Chapter requested Government assistance in 1974 and was turned down. The 1978 budget figures were the first to record government assistance of $4,100 from the Ministry of Recreation and Sport; this figure jumped to $10,817 in 1979. In her 1979 outgoing message President Pascoe was explicit about the Crafts Council’s resources:

> The Crafts Council housekeeps with care, carefully sifting priorities, but we cannot avoid a sense of frustration when we are so aware that craft contributes so much to a fulfilling life for so many New Zealanders. There are so many areas where we could work effectively to advance the craft movement in this country, but with a small budget we are limited in realising many of our objectives. We see the need to be involved in educational activities which encourage awareness of professional standards. We see the need for a much closer liaison with practising craftspeople so that we may become aware of their needs and problems and are able to act more effectively (Pascoe “Annual Report” 3).

The following year Recreation and Sport announced that it would no longer support crafts—delegates to a leisure seminar noted an undue emphasis by that Ministry on sport anyway (Pascoe “Presidents” 2)—and the CCNZ was told to seek funds from the QEII Arts Council. The Arts Council was not forthcoming, and from 1980 to 1986 grants came from the New Zealand Lottery Board in amounts ranging from $23,000 in 1980 to $120,000 in 1986. For the 1987/88 financial year, John Scott, then President, noted a change: “In the past we were funded directly from the Lotteries Board, and received our funds as a lump sum. This has altered, and now we are funded on an instalment basis through QE
Figure 55. Opening Ceremonies of CCNZ Headquarters at 22 The Terrace, Wellington
On the left, Prime Minister, David Lange; on the right, CCNZ President, Colin Slade. The Prime Minister’s presence, and the microphones to his left, indicate the significance of the Crafts Council’s arrival on The Terrace, the corporate and government centre of Wellington.

Figure 56. Gallery, 22 The Terrace (below right)
The Crafts Council proudly showed its retail space on the cover of New Zealand Crafts. The decor—white walls, uncluttered pedestals—was that of an art gallery. This interior design decision was strategic, showing craft as art. The new location saw an increase in the number of visitors and a 30% improvement in gallery sales (Arthur 119).

Figure 57. Upper Floor, 22 The Terrace
The interior designer, Gary Couchman, retained and polished the original wood floors and ceiling in the circulation areas adjacent to offices. Couchman was awarded the New Zealand Wool Board’s 1986 Wool Designer Award for the refurbishment.

Figure 58. 22 The Terrace, Wellington, 10 June 2005
Built in 1866 as a doctor’s residence and surgery, this gentleman’s residence has persevered amongst the multi-storey buildings that surround it. The Lottery Board loaned $50,000 to the CCNZ to refurbish the building as offices, board room, resource centre, library, and gallery.
As an Arts Council client, life became more secure for the Crafts Council from 1987 to 1991. Incremental increases to its allotment were forthcoming, and although the organisation had to be frugal, projects could be planned and undertaken. In 1991 a Government restructuring placed the Arts Council under the purview of the new Ministry of Cultural Affairs. Tiered funding was introduced, whereby applications had to be made for specific projects, and, despite assurances from the Arts Council that it would be taken care of\(^{57}\) under this system, the Crafts Council’s funding was cut completely in 1992 and it terminated. The system of applications for specific projects undoubtedly assisted the individuals or teams who applied—furniture makers such as Humphrey Ikin, Colin Slade, and Carin Wilson received grants to buy equipment or undertake a body of work—but it served to fragment the community because there were haves and have-nots, exacerbating rifts in the membership.

Alan Loney, in an Editorial in the Summer 1989 issue of New Zealand Crafts, wrote about “three significant shifts” that had affected arts and crafts during the 1980s: an increase in educational opportunities;\(^{58}\) an increase in government and corporate monies to the sector; and the advent of marketing into the arts (Loney). He asserted that the terms ‘marketing,’ ‘innovation,’ and ‘excellence’ were the language of big business, the adoption of which was seen by some as a means of economic

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>Source</th>
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<td>50,061</td>
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<td>326,538</td>
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<td>290,000</td>
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<td>1991/92</td>
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Figure 59. Revenue, Expenditure and Source of Funding
World Crafts Council and Crafts Council of New Zealand, 1974-1991

Revenue and Expenditure were obtained from Annual Reports. Support from the Lottery Board and then the QEII Arts Council steadily increased but so did the responsibilities of the Crafts Council. It was always a struggle to balance the books and in the last several years of the CCNZ’s existence, discussion in the Annual Reports refers to juggling of accounts and negotiations with banks to manage the debt.

* This column shows the grant, as a portion of revenue, that was received each year. The Source column indicates its origin.

\(^{57}\) "the intention is to accommodate the Crafts Council as a client among quite a predominance of performing arts groups" (Scott “John” May 1991 2). Peter Gibbs noted equivocal funding promises by the Arts Council in 1994: despite assurances that $300,000 previously allocated to the CCNZ would continue to support craft, the funds initially went to the Arts Marketing Board of Aotearoa, dedicated to all visual arts, and subsequently went to other Arts Council programmes (Gibbs “Performance”).

\(^{58}\) There is no question that the inauguration of craft education was significant. But the language of the Government’s announcement back in 1985 (page 60) made its motives clear: craft was a potential export revenue earner.
survival. And whereas the prevailing belief in business was that the marketplace was consumer-driven, Loney concluded: “The received wisdom about creativity is that it is maker driven” (Loney).

The Arts Council had adopted the language of big business. As the major funding conduit for the Crafts Council, it financed the Index of New Zealand Craftworkers which, it will be recalled, was intended to identify “the best” for marketing purposes. Colin Slade described the consequences of this thrust: “There were all these members who loved the involvement, who lapped up the magazine and attended any lecture of a travelling artist and so on, but they weren’t names. . . . So what they belonged for was the information, the networking and the mutual support and that kind of thing” (Slade Personal 2008). Slade felt that it was important to promote good work but was aware of the dichotomy between the CCNZ members making practical domestic items and those called “craft artists.” He agreed with Alan Loney that the marketing ethos prevailed.

The Arts Council was conflicted about financing a membership organisation (Scott “Crafts Council”; Feeney59). This conflict coincided with structural changes instituted by the Labour Government (1984 to 1990) and subsequent National Government. In addition to following through with Labour’s liberalisation of state-owned enterprises, National announced policies in 1990 to reduce the budget deficit and institute commercialisation of state provisions (Easton 251); beginning in 1984, according to Evans et al., “[t]he need to reduce the fiscal deficit . . . and concerns about the productivity of government departments motivated reforms aimed at getting better value from government spending” (1872). The National policy of ‘user pays’ was intended to eliminate dependence on government. It could be said that the Arts Council was enforcing this policy by its desire to withdraw funds from a membership organisation and transfer them to a self-help marketing initiative.

An attempt to resolve, once and for all, the difference in vision between the Crafts and Arts Councils occurred in 1991 when the Arts Council spent “thousands” (Scott “Editorial”)60 of dollars of funds, ear-marked for Crafts Council programmes, on a review of crafts and its national association. The resulting report was commissioned from Albert Stafford of the management consulting firm A.J. Stafford and Associates.61 Stafford, with a background in economics and marketing, assessed craft in terms of fiscal parameters taking no account of the community’s broader needs or character. This was not the first time that a judge of the sector was ill-equipped to deliver a fair judgement. In 1981 the Crafts Council commissioned W.G.T. Wiggs to write a report on the possibilities of export of New Zealand crafts. Wiggs, a lawyer, made valid observations such as: the negligible difference between Pākehā craft and overseas craft did not justify inflated prices that absorbed transport costs; and design would have to be improved to create a point of difference for overseas buyers. However, his recommendations that craftspeople cut costs by instituting a production line and improve design by appropriating Māori motifs belied his expertise in the realm of craft and indicated a lack of cultural awareness (Wiggs 64-82). Albert Stafford’s lack of knowledge with respect to the culture of New Zealand craft is evident throughout his Report.

His terms of reference, identified by the Arts Council without consultation with the Crafts Council (Crafts Council “Review”), were:

1. to identify the perceived needs of the craft sector and the professional infrastructure required by the sector;
2. to identify the range of services which the craft sector considers desirable for its development in New Zealand;
3. to identify those services which the craft sector believes to be necessary at a national level and which cannot be provided by the membership organisations currently operating in the craft sector;

59 Warren Feeney’s thesis about the Canterbury Society of Arts reports on denial of funding from the QEII Arts Council in the 1970s and 80s because the CSA was a membership organisation (273-284).
60 The Arts Council identified this as “approximately $13,000” (QEII Arts Council ”Craft Sector” 5).
61 Stafford specialised in cultural research and marketing projects in New Zealand and Australia (QEII Arts Council ”Craft Sector” 1).
[4.] to identify and clarify which CCNZ functions currently make use of Arts Council investment;
[5.] to determine which of the CCNZ’s goals and objectives are in line and which are at variance with the Arts Council’s objectives in funding the CCNZ;
[6.] to recommend how the Arts Council can best identify and provide resources for services and structures which effectively foster the creation, presentation and distribution of craft, with particular reference to marketing, and which offers the most effective means of servicing the identified needs of the craft sector;
[7.] to identify any options for restructuring of the CCNZ which would deliver services to the craft sector in a more effective way and which would ensure that Arts Council support in this sector is targeted to the Arts Council’s policy objectives, and recommend the most appropriate method and timing of any transition;
[8.] to report to the Council on any other issues of concern about the craft sector that emerge from the review purpose” (Stafford 2: numbering not in original).

Analysis of these terms of reference indicates that the outcome of ‘the research’ was a foregone conclusion. For instance, clause 3 assumes that existing membership organisations were wanting; clause 6 emphasises “marketing” prior to the craft sector’s being solicited about its perceived needs; and clause 7 mentions “restructuring” and “a more effective way,” again assuming that the status quo needed restructuring. In addition, the CCNZ’s response to the Report makes note of the Arts Council’s desire for an alignment of goals and objectives (clauses 5 and 7), yet neither Stafford nor the Arts Council defined what those objectives were (Crafts Council “Response”).

The Crafts Council’s primary reference with respect to its funder’s objectives was The Queen Elizabeth the Second Arts Council of New Zealand Act 1974. At the top of the list of the organisation’s functions and powers (Appendix 4), this act legislated the encouragement, promotion and development of professional standards in the arts. Immediately following were encouragement, promotion and development of practice and appreciation of, and public interest in, the arts, as well as accessibility . . . to every person in New Zealand, as far as may be practicable, all forms of artistic activity;” (Section 9). On one hand the Arts Council focused on professional arts; on the other it was responsible for grass roots practice, appreciation, and access to all arts. This diverse mandate encompassed a membership association like the CCNZ dedicated to professionals and amateurs, and Arts Council funding was used by the CCNZ for advocacy, resources and exhibitions that addressed “every person.” Yet the Arts Council’s emphasis on professional practitioners and the marketing of their work took no account of the means by which its obligations to the grass roots would be met. Albert Stafford’s focus, as stated in the sixth term of reference, was professionals.

More than 180 people attended discussion groups (Scott “Crafts Sector”) held throughout the country and were asked to self-record their names (Stafford Appendices cover), but some of the attendees said nothing. Generalisations, based on the words of vocal people, pepper the Report. For instance: “many craft artists” have concerns over services provided by the CCNZ (Stafford 19); “craft people complained of poor communication” (23); “concern was expressed” about the few business people on the CCNZ Executive (25). No quantitative analysis was undertaken to back up the collective nouns. When it came to consideration of a range of restructuring options, small discussion groups were convened. Thus, far fewer than 180 people determined the fate of the CCNZ during “a fairly tight” two-month schedule (Stafford 3).

62 In place until 1994 when it was repealed. In the Interpretation section of the Act, crafts were included under “arts.”
63 Judy Wilson letter 21.11.91: “Having sat silently (amazing for me) through all 3 Auckland review meetings, I saw how clearly Albert led the questions and elicited the desired responses. . . . Would you like all the resources dumped in one basket and used on marketing and promotion’ he said to group of professionals: ‘Yes, great’ they replied. He didn’t say ‘Shall we get rid of the Craft Council and all they are achieving as a back-up body and leave you with nothing but marketing and promotion.’” Later Wilson noted, “. . . at the Auckland meeting, the NZWWWS lady didn’t say ONE thing, except her name . . .” (J. Wilson Letter).
64 September and October 1991.
Stafford's Executive Summary can be summarised as follows: domestic and international markets for craft needed development and promotion; a national organisation, other than the Crafts Council, was needed; the new organisation, tentatively called the Arts and Craft Development Board, should assume the Crafts Council's funding; and the new board would direct its energies to visual arts generally. It was recommended that Crafts Council funding continue until July 1992, and then be transferred to the new board. Even though the Powers of the aforementioned 1974 Act included, “(h) Advise and assist any bodies or organisations that are engaged in artistic activities, including bodies or organisations that are financed partly or wholly from public funds:” (Section 10), Stafford's Summary was a pronouncement rather than advice or assistance for the CCNZ.

The Crafts Council's Response raised many objections under each of the Stafford Report's subheadings: Terms of Reference, Methodology, Perceived Needs, Range of Services, National Level Services, Use of QEII Investment, CCNZ Goals and Objectives, and Services and Structures. A succinct abridgement of their closely-typed seven-page document would be: the review was not done correctly, fairly, or adequately. Nor did Albert Stafford avail himself of the considerable experience accumulated during the 26 years of WCC/CCNZ existence. For instance, he suggested that New Zealand Crafts should metamorphose into a “high quality design magazine” that would attract profit-making revenues from the public and advertisers. Peter Gibbs, the magazine's editor and publisher, having made attempts to do just that, declared Stafford's remarks “completely naïve” (Gibbs “Clippings”). And with respect to marketing, it wasn't as if marketing had been absent from the Crafts Council's agenda. To counter accusations of a marketing desert, the Executive Director compiled a creditable list for the previous four years only—exhibitions, press releases, brochures, catalogues, the magazine and newsletters, and the Index (Belich “Marketing”). To no avail. The Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council accepted the Stafford Report's recommendations and denied the Crafts Council an annual grant contract for 1992.

Coincident with the Stafford Report was the Crafts Council's budgetary shortfall for 1991. This was due largely to Mau Mahara (Guardians of Memory), an exhibition (Figure 60) conceived in 1989 and undertaken with a $76,000 grant from the 1990 Sesquicentennial Commission (“1990 Project”). Unlike previous exhibitions that were planned for a single venue and featured excellence in one form or another, this one was bicultural, historical and scheduled to tour nationally. The 200 craft objects ranged from a Presentation Casket given to Bishop Selwyn in 1868 (Figure 60) and korotete (eel holding pots), to knitted dolls’ clothes and tattooing tools. Mau Mahara was shown in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin with consequent costs for insurance, packing and transportation. Despite concerted efforts to maximise audiences via engagement with the Museum Directors Federation (MDF), Mau Mahara did not have the attendance that was hoped for. In its Response to the Stafford Report, Clause 8.4, the CCNZ noted: “after protracted negotiations it [MDF] declined to become involved in Mau Mahara, thus adding greatly to the exhibition's cost structure.” The CCNZ incurred a large debt by extending itself into advancing cultural awareness of historical and contemporary craft. Stafford, oblivious to the circumstances of Mau Mahara, criticised the CCNZ for failing to foster a closer relationship with the MDF.

On 17 May 1992 the Crafts Council held a Special General Meeting during which it discussed its financial position. The Council demonstrated the steps it had taken to enable timely settlement of its debt of $142,167, but concluded:

We believe time will show that the Crafts Council Executive has acted in good faith to deal responsibly with the debt. Prior to the withdrawal of funding from Arts Council, the cashflow enabled CCNZ to manage that debt and though the financial situation was precarious, it was manageable. As a consequence of the Arts Council's decision in December, the Crafts Council has limited flexibility (“Future of the CCNZ” 3).

65 “Draft Financial Statements” dated 31 December 1991 lists revenue from Mau Mahara as $259,693 and expenditure $404,206, resulting in a deficit of $144,513. This amount is separate from the CCNZ balance sheet in Figure 37.
In an upbeat letter to all members in June 1992, Margaret Belich, the Executive Director, announced a restructuring (see page 75) that would maintain all the benefits that the membership was used to: “key services, the Gallery, publications, information and marketing. AND a national voice for craftspeople” (Belich Letter). However a surge of membership support—financial, political, social and verbal—was not forthcoming. In 1992 the Arts Council appointed the Visual Arts Marketing Board of New Zealand,\(^{66}\) with Albert Stafford as Chairman. The Crafts Council had been eliminated as an entity and ‘crafts’ was eliminated from the title of its successor.

What happened to New Zealand Crafts and the Gallery at 22 The Terrace? Peter Gibbs had the foresight to purchase the magazine, with a team of thirty shareholders, and continue its publication under the banner of Craft Print Limited beginning with Issue 40, Winter 1992, renaming it Craft New Zealand. He managed to keep the magazine going until Issue 46, Summer 1993. At that time, since it was not paying its way, he let it go. When the Crafts Council went into liquidation, a dedicated group, titled the Interim Steering Committee with Colin Slade as President (“Interim”), took up the Arts Council’s grant of $30,000 to consult with, inform and query craftspeople about what they wanted, if anything, from a national organisation. The new body, Craft New Zealand/Mahi A Ringa O Aotearoa (shortened to Craft Aotearoa), attempted to keep the Gallery going. However, limited resources would not allow assumption of debts to creditors. By means of an “ex-gratia payment” (Slade “Letters” 3) the Arts Council agreed to pay off craftspeople who were owed money for goods that had been sold. The liquidator then sold the Gallery to a private buyer, James Bowman, who was a former Gallery director. Bowman’s familiarity with the makers enabled an easy transition into a more commercially-oriented dealer gallery—after all, the makers still needed an outlet for their wares.

The consensus among the craftspeople who wrote about the end of the Crafts Council was that the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council had betrayed it. Frank Stark, the Executive Director of the Crafts Council

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\(^{66}\) The Marketing Board’s official name was Arts Marketing Board of Aotearoa (AMBA). Board members were Ian Fraser (former commissioner, Expo), John Marsh (Māori Arts and Crafts Institute, Rotorua), Gordon Moller (architect), Bruce Robinson (Director Waikato Art Museum), and Carole Shepheard (Artist/teacher) (“Marketing Board”). Shepheard had links to the Crafts Council and was on the Executive 1985/86 (“Craft Council … Executive Committee”).
at the time, wrote a scathing report just before the proverbial axe fell. His opinion is worth noting because, “I am not a crafts-person, nor will I be employed by the Crafts Council when any of this takes affect. I really don’t have a vested interest in the outcome . . .” (Stark). Stark’s appointment was due to a maternity leave and he felt that his considerable prior employment with the Arts Council, both as a staff member and on contract, would benefit the Crafts Council’s transition into the new modes of government funding. By the end of his tenure, even he was confounded by the Arts Council: “During this year the Arts Council has dealt with the Crafts Council almost solely on the financial level. We have had great difficulty finding anybody within the Arts Council interested in even talking about our programmes and policies.” Stark observed that although the Arts Council would not enter into discussions, it had engaged an outside consultant to review the CCNZ’s programmes and policies. He said that regardless of Albert Stafford’s recommendations and the Arts Council’s ultimate decision, “. . . the current situation exists as a result of a process initiated and controlled by the Arts Council, which has specifically excluded the Crafts Council up to the last gasp” (Stark).

An extensive investigation of the Arts Council is not within the parameters of this thesis. Jenny Pattrick was the Chair of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council at the time and her letter, dated 20 May 1991, to John Scott stated: “I believe that the Crafts Council of my time – a wide ranging, multi-focused, membership organisation – is no longer needed in New Zealand, but that a tightly focused, promotional, information centre for crafts is possibly the future role of a Crafts Council or Centre of whatever” (Pattrick Letter). In place of the CCNZ, the QEI Arts Council substituted the Arts Marketing Board of Aotearoa (Figure 61), whose focus was solely on marketing. But in 1995 when AMBA was disbanded, Pattrick was quoted in the Wellington Evening Post: “AMBA was a difficult concept to make work - perhaps a flawed one” (Ots). The Arts Council replaced the CCNZ with an ill-considered entity leaving the craft community without services and resources.

Three important issues were left in the wake of the Crafts Council’s elimination: 1) education; 2) the Government’s solution to an oversight body for crafts; and 3) the craft organisations with whom the Crafts Council tussled for many years. These phenomena comprise the dénouement of a national organisation that had advocated for craft for 26 years.

John Scott (Figure 62), as President of the Crafts Council, was asked to open an exhibition of the work of graduating Craft Design Diploma students in 1991. Afterwards he reflected: “There was some fine work and much mediocre with the work predominantly paintings and sculptural applications of ‘craft media.’ Where was the exquisitely designed craft, the functional ceramics, the jewellery or the glass?” (Scott “John” Mar. 1991) As the Principal of Wanganui Regional Community College, a member of various arts advisory committees, and the recipient of a Fulbright Award in 1986 to study craft education in the United States, Scott was judging from expert knowledge (“Candidate Statements” 4). He was instrumental in negotiations for craft education in 1986/87 yet was well aware by 1991 that the
polytechnics, made autonomous in 1989, were competing for student enrolments. Craft education was no longer overseen nationally by the Department of Education. Rather than stick to ‘pure’ crafts, polytechnic programme leaders began to see a greater attraction, and greater revenue, in the all-encompassing category of visual arts.

_Craftnews_ recorded in 1991 that proposals for Foundation Studies in Visual Arts had been submitted to the New Zealand Qualifications Authority by Northland, Wanganui, Wairariki, Christchurch, and Nelson. Taking Wanganui’s template as an example, the Foundation Course in Art/Craft/Design was envisaged to: “develop further knowledge, skills and attitudes through problem solving projects”; “clarify future directional choices based on experience”; and “create and express ideas and feelings in two and three dimensions” (“Education: Wanganui’s”). The generic nature of such courses meant they could be taught by graduates from art schools, instead of the specialised craftspeople needed for craft programmes. So what John Scott was seeing—“sculptural applications of craft media”—represented the direction in which instruction was already heading: towards visual arts. It was only a matter of time before the discipline necessary to master craft technique was usurped.

Without a national body, to whom did craft practitioners look for support? The Arts Council’s agenda of craft being a ‘sub-genre’ was in place before the dénouement of the CCNZ: “During 1991 and following the review of its visual arts programme, [QEII Arts] Council recommended staff explore opportunities for amalgamation of its programmes of support for crafts, visual arts and film” (“QEII News”). Protestations from the craft community went unnoticed. In reviewing Grace Cochrane’s _The Crafts Movement in Australia_, weaver Judy Wilson wrote (comparing Australia and New Zealand): “How I would love to see our parliament debate the importance of craft, and the need to retain our own identity and voice within the visual arts sector. Equally gratifying would be if 70% of craftspeople responded to the need to speak out on issues such as the need to prevent institutions from assimilating craft into a minor corner of the ‘visual arts’ sector” (J. Wilson “Crafts Movement” 45). Crafts became a sub-category of visual arts in terms of funding, paralleling what had happened in the education sector. After orchestrating the priority of visual arts, in 1994 the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council was dissolved (Statistics New Zealand _Yearbook_ 95 286) and Creative New Zealand (CNZ), “as a Crown entity under the Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa Act 1994,” came to the fore. Under the purview of the Ministry of Arts Culture and Heritage, CNZ’s purpose is “to encourage, promote and support the arts in New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders” (_Creative New Zealand_ “Statement” 7). The tiered funding system that was enacted for the QEII Arts Council in 1991 was retained by Creative New Zealand.

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67 A new funding system for the tertiary sector, based solely on student numbers, was instituted in 1991 (New Zealand: Dept. of Statistics 1990 262).
Support, therefore, is solely monetary. Craft practitioners who are known, adept at writing applications and able to postpone projects until the money comes through (funding is not granted in retrospect) can join the sizeable pool of applications in the twice-yearly funding rounds. It is a time-consuming process seen in positive terms primarily by those who have been successful. Creative New Zealand revised its funding parameters, beginning in February 2009, and is currently under review again.68

Finally, what became of the membership? In 1982, when the Crafts Council's Constitution was revised, the makeup of the Executive changed from comprising representatives of the national bodies, such as potters and weavers, to a gathering of individuals who were accountable to the membership as a whole. Subsequent to this revision several questions were debated at length: Does the Crafts Council represent all craftpeople if its fees-paying membership is only 1200-1400? Does the Crafts Council only rightfully represent its members, their needs and priorities? Does the Crafts Council represent craft as a human activity? (Scott “John” Oct. 1991 2-3) In order that it be seen to encompass all craftspeople and the discipline itself, the CCNZ felt that the national bodies, which came to be known as Allied Organisations, needed inclusion to air their concerns and ideas with each other as well as itself. The Allied Organisations and the Crafts Council got together regularly in the latter part of the 1980s at the Annual General Meeting of the Crafts Council (Gibbs “Allied”).

Following the dissolution of the Crafts Council, the Allied Organisations were vocal about a restructuring of the CCNZ, suggesting that a new executive, representing all craft areas—national bodies, craft galleries, academics, professional and amateur craftpeople—be constituted. Working together,70 the Allied Organisations and CCNZ put together Restructuring Proposals for consideration by the membership on 17 May 1992. It was recommended that: 1) the CCNZ remain a membership organisation; 2) the Executive be restructured; and 3) the Gallery, magazine and information services associated with 22 The Terrace be established as The New Zealand Crafts Trust under the Charitable Trusts Act (“Minutes of a Special”). In one respect it was a fruitless exercise because, as John Scott noted in the April edition of Craftnews, “the message we are getting from QELL is that the Arts Council does not see it as appropriate to support craft through a membership organisation” (Scott “Crafts Council”).

In another respect, although the national umbrella disappeared, the exercise consolidated the efforts of the separate organisations of potters, quilters, woodturners and embroiderers. It may have been that “apathy, combined with a general disbelief that organisations like the Crafts Council can be wound up by big brother or anyone else” (Gibbs “Editorial”) killed the CCNZ, but craft practice still exists. In recent years, attempts have been made—Volume in Napier in 2008 (Figure 63) and Craft Now in Christchurch in 2009—to address the notion of a national collective but, as of late, no concrete steps have been taken towards accumulating a constituency. Despite Douglas Lloyd-Jenkins’ 1993 description of the existing craft movement as “orthodox,” “introspective and isolated,” and “generally patronising” to his generation’s “youth-driven expressions of craft” (Lloyd-Jenkins “We’re Younger”), it was Lloyd-Jenkins who welcomed all generations of craft practitioners at Volume.

The last words on the Crafts Council go to Colin Slade. In writing his farewell as President of the national body in 1987, he stated: “If therefore I have one single message as I reluctantly leave this

68 Objectspace, the aforementioned craft/design gallery in Auckland, received Recurrent Funding until 2011 from Creative New Zealand (Creative New Zealand “Recurrent”).
69 “The new bill—the Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa Bill—proposes to replace the Arts Council, the Arts Board, Te Waka Toi and the Pacific Arts Community with a single governing board, which would be responsible for policy, strategy and allocating funding” (Creative New Zealand “Statement” 15). The bill’s prospective commencement date is 1 October 2011.
70 John Scott: “The Allied Organisations do not seem as antagonistic to CCNZ as in the past, and CCNZ has had the benefit of the wisdom and positive input into setting clear objectives, from a wide range of crafts groups. To their credit Allied Organisations have not approached CCNZ out of personal interest, but in the interest of craft in general” (Scott “John” Oct. 1991 2).
71 A 2011 internet search found the following craft associations: Association of New Zealand Embroiderers’ Guild Inc.; National Association of New Zealand Quilters; National Association of Woodworkers NZ Inc.; New Zealand Lace Society Inc.; New Zealand Society of Artists in Glass; New Zealand Society of Potters (Inc.); New Zealand Spinning, Weaving and Woolcrafts Society Inc. (known as Creative Fibre).
position, it is this. It will always be a struggle to assert the place of craft in our society but the campaign will be impossible without a strong and unified support base” (Slade “Annual”).

Conclusion

This chapter looked at the rise and fall of a national craft entity in New Zealand from the 1960s to 1993. Although its history was troubled by finances, territorial protectiveness, and the minor status given to craft culture in New Zealand, the World Crafts Council, New Zealand Branch, and the Crafts Council of New Zealand can be credited with worthy achievements: recognition on and interaction with the world stage; exposure of New Zealand craftspeople to international standards and esteemed professional practitioners; increases in knowledge and education; compilation of lists of practitioners, courses and craft outlets; and acknowledgement of talent of which the country could be proud. The chapter identified some of the furniture makers who brought exposure to their community and assisted in shaping the CCNZ: these makers form the basis of the next chapter and the case studies in Chapter 4. And lastly, the details of how and why the Crafts Council met its end were outlined, including consequences for education and the presence of craft in New Zealand from the mid 1990s to the present.

What does one conclude from the rise and decline of the craft phenomenon? Firstly, it takes years for an organisation to develop. The WCC’s gradual increase in membership and credibility enabled its segue into the Crafts Council, a recognised national body for craft. Longevity then secured funding and permitted commitment to long-term projects such as craft education and the building of an Index of world-class practitioners. The WCC/CCNZ was dedicated to caring for crafts, a vision that required decades for its realisation. Concurrently, the WCC/CCNZ was blessed with the commitment of people with skills, tenacity and willingness to work hard to achieve that vision. Secondly, the CCNZ’s list of achievements—an initiative to bring craft education to tertiary institutions; publication of resources, magazines and newsletters that informed membership and the public; establishment of a resource centre and gallery as a focus for craft marketing and research; instigation of exhibitions that educated the public and brought recognition to practitioners—were comparable to those taking place in international arenas such as Australia, Canada and the United States. The transition from WCC to CCNZ was a shift from an overseas focus to a national one, yet ongoing attention to what was happening in other countries meant that New Zealand was not functioning in isolation. The CCNZ could proudly claim parity with craft organisations elsewhere.
Thirdly, the CCNZ promoted high standards in craft. The organisation: created the Index of New Zealand Craftworkers that highlighted 86 top-notch craftspeople; initiated juried exhibitions and competitions that raised standards; engaged international authorities to provoke and encourage New Zealanders; profiled exemplary practitioners, including up-and-coming makers, in its magazines; set an example for retailers by means of the objects and display in its own gallery; and fostered New Zealand craft on the international stage. Finally, as a national voice and advocate, the CCNZ affiliated with politicians, bureaucrats, cultural personnel and the general public, both nationally and internationally, raising the profile of New Zealand craft and bringing attention to its particular concerns. It also liaised with craft practitioners and associations, whether they were part of its membership or not. In sum, the Crafts Council of New Zealand represented the craft process and its outcomes.

The CCNZ's major vulnerability, throughout its lifespan, was minimal financial resources. As a result, Arts Council funding, beginning in 1987/88, was welcomed, but acceptance contributed to alienation of some of the membership and a consequent downturn in subscriptions. With the membership being diverse, ranging from hobbyists to professionals, limited resources meant that the CCNZ could not satisfy everyone. It tried to lessen the gap amongst its constituency by promoting standards, but some practitioners found greater satisfaction in local craft associations that valued collegiality over competition. Ultimately, however, the primary factor in the CCNZ's demise was the New Zealand context: the economic paradigm shift that took place in the late 1980s affecting all sectors of society, including those related to craft: education, imports, and government funding to cultural institutions. As a consequence, while craft improved in stature with the existence of the Crafts Council, its lack of esteem, in the face of competition from cheaper goods and its relegation to a sub-category of visual arts, meant that it assumed a diminished role in the cultural fabric of New Zealand.

In one of the last national craft publications, Judy Wilson described the state of the nation: “with the demise of the Crafts Council, the craft sector in New Zealand stands to be one of the rare groups in the world's family of Crafts Councils to have completely lost their identity and with it a voice for craft at a national level” (J. Wilson “Why”). Not everyone agreed with Wilson. Opinions have varied amongst the practitioners whose opinions I solicited over the last three years: some stated that the Crafts Council's time had come by 1993 and the makers have carried on regardless; some considered it a travesty that the Crafts Council was so readily expunged from the record; and still others were just plain tired—they had expended all the energy they could muster and with few people to whom to pass the baton, the effort had to be abandoned.

The mandate of the World Crafts Council bears reiteration: to promote and strengthen the human values and cultural significance of crafts. Human values and cultural significance are generated from the grassroots, but their recognition takes place higher up. For the New Zealand craftsperson, there is now no infrastructure to support or promote their endeavours. While it existed, the Crafts Council assumed that supportive role. In the absence of any infrastructure to assist practitioners and promote the human values and cultural significance of crafts, assistance and promotion does not happen. Creative New Zealand offers individual grants to established craftspeople; potters and weavers, glass-blowers and furniture makers certainly continue to survive. But knowing about those makers is generated by self-promotion, word-of-mouth and local publicity. The consequences of this void, at the national level, will be discussed in my Conclusion.

72 In the years prior to ‘the end’ each annual report of the QEII Arts Council contained a passage about its craft activities. When the CCNZ was terminated, the crafts simply disappeared. For the year ending 30 June 1992, the Arts Council stated: ‘A major report and analysis of craft infrastructure requirements and opportunities was undertaken during this period. The Arts Council has accepted the need for a new and independent marketing organisation for craft and the visual arts and will further its development in 1992/93’ (28). For the year ending 30 June 1993: “The new Arts Marketing Board of Aotearoa New Zealand (AMBA) was set up to develop markets and services for the craft and visual arts sector” (35). I suggest that the lack of an official tribute to the Crafts Council’s achievements demonstrated the Arts Council’s collusion and desire to forget the episode.